THE

EDINBURGH TALES.

CONDUCTED BY

MRS. JOHNSTONE.

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THE EXPERIENCES OF RICHARD TAYLOR, ESQ.

INTRODUCTION.

There must be many persons in London, particularly in the busy neighbourhood extending from St Paul's Churchyard to Charing Cross, perfectly familiar with Mr Richard Taylor. His *burrow*, or central point, was in some lane, small street, or alley, between Arundel Street and Surrey Stairs, whence he daily revolved in an orbit of which no man could trace the eccentricity. Its extremities seemed to be Gray's Inn on the north, the Obelisk on the south, the London Docks on the vulgar side, and Hyde Park Corner on the point of gentility. It was next to impossible, any day from eleven till two o'clock, between the years 1815 and 1832, to walk from Pall Mall to St Paul's, without once, if not oftener, encountering "The Gentleman with the Umbrella." There he emerged from Chancery Lane, and here he popped upon you from Temple Lane; you saw him glide down Norfolk Street, or lost sight of him all at once about Drury Lane; or beheld him holding on briskly, but without effort, along the Strand, till, about Charing Cross, he suddenly disappeared to start upon you, like a Will o' the Wisp, in some unexpected corner. Now was he seen in the Chancery Court—now sauntering towards Billingsgate Market—now at the Stock Exchange, and again at the Bow Street Office. He might, in the same hour, be seen at the hustings in Palace Yard, and hovering on the outskirts of one of Orator Hunt's meetings, as far off as Spa-fields; at a reasonable hour, in the gallery of the House of Commons, and next in Mr Edward Irving's Chapel. The British Museum divided his favour with the great butcher markets, and with the picture and book auctions, which he regularly frequented. The best idea may be formed of the movements of Mr Richard Taylor, from the different notions formed of his character and calling. For the first five years of his sojourning in London, many conjectures were formed concerning this "Gentleman about town," or "The Gentleman with the Umbrella;" by which descriptive appellation he came to be pretty generally known among the shopmen and clerks along his line of quick-march. His costume and appearance, strange as the association seems, was half-military, half-Moravian. By many he was set down as a reporter for the daily prints—vulgarly a *penny-a-liner;* a calling universally sneered at by those whose figments and marvels are paid from twopence a line upwards. His frequent attendance at the Police Offices, and in the Courts of Law, favoured this conjecture, as well as his occasional appearance at places of public amusement. A sagacious tradesman in Cockspur Street, a reformer, who had been involved in "the troubles" of the times of Hardy and Horne Tooke, set him down as a half-pay officer, now a spy of the Home Office. A tavern-keeper in Fleet Street, who had seen him at the Bow Street Office voluntarily step forward to interpret for a poor Polish Jew, against whom law was going hard from ignorance of the Cockney dialect of the English language, affirmed that he was a Polish refugee. But he had also been heard to interpret for an itinerant weather-glass seller from the Lake of Como, in a similar scrape;

and for a Turkish seaman who, having first been robbed, was next to be sent to prison for not consenting to be twice robbed—of his time and his money—in prosecuting the thief. These things rather told in his favour. One day the editor of a well-known liberal paper was seen to stop "The Gentleman with the Umbrella," and carry him into a great bookseller's shop; and on another he was discovered in a hackney coach with some benevolent quakers from America, who had been looking on the seamy side of civilization in Newgate. Here was corroboration of good character. Of "The Gentleman with the Umbrella," we may tell farther, that his sister-in-law, Mrs James Taylor, the wife of the rich solicitor in Brunswick Square, affectionately named him, among her friends, "our excellent and unfortunate brother, Mr Richard;" her husband, familiarly, "our poor Dick;" a young Templar, studying German, quaintly called him "Mephistophiles;" and Mary Anne Moir, his goddaughter, emphatically, "*The Good Genius*."

It was, however, as "The Gentleman with the Umbrella" that Mr Richard Taylor was best known; for this was his name with the multitude, the many poor women and children of whom he was the daily speaking acquaintance, and with two thirds of the men. He was, indeed, lavish of his acquaintanceship, but as chary of his intimacy. His circle took in both extremes of society, and all that lay between them. On the same morning he might have been seen leaning on the cane of the neatly rolled up brown silk umbrella, fixed with its mother-of-pearl button, talking with the richest merchants leaving the Exchange, or conversing with an Irish market-woman, or an old Jew clothesman. Such was the street *status* of Mr Richard Taylor, when Peace sent the hero of Waterloo to perambulate the pavement of London; and, in his Grace, the people of Mr Richard's beat discovered, to his great annoyance, the double of their "Gentleman with the Umbrella." In the height, and the general outline of the figure, the compactness of the person, the alacrity and firmness of movement, and also in the *length* of the countenance, there might be some slight resemblance, as well as in the plainness, accuracy, and (a certain style established) the unpretending neatness of the dress. But the main feature was assuredly the umbrella; with something perhaps of that cast of countenance which Richard himself called the *mock-heroic*, and which he had but narrowly escaped, while he thought it more fully developed in the more aristocratic nose of his double. Any one who had seen these alleged counterparts without their hats, would have been on the instant dispossessed of this ideal resemblance. Even young ladies allowed that Mr Richard Taylor, without his hat, was a quite other thing. And Mary Anne, whose glory was her beautiful and redundant golden tresses, then looked with genuine admiration on the superb development of brain displayed in

The bald polish of the honoured head

of her godfather; and in his deep sunk, dark eyes, grey and lucid, saw gatherings of meanings, and signs of thoughts, which do not often visit the minds of heroes. This alleged, or imaginary resemblance, was, we have said, exceedingly annoying to Mr Richard Taylor, who forthwith became for some months a small lion; or, what is more teasing, the reflection of a great lion, and a regular spectacle to holiday folks and country cousins. To crown his chagrin, some shabby artist, who had better opportunities of seeing him than his Grace of Wellington, actually sketched him *en hero*; and, at the small cost of a few frogs and a stiff stock, posted him in several print shops as the true lion of Waterloo. This was the more provoking to our hero, as, if there was one set of men whom he detested more than another, it was heroes. He had suffered by them, and seen others suffer: they were but instruments, it is true; but he said "One does not like the gallows any more than the hangman."

Few words may tell Mr Richard's story, and explain the causes which, at a comparatively early period of life, sent him abroad among the busy population of London, with no apparent charge save his umbrella, and no occupation save doing some little good to his fellow creatures. Richard and his brother, James Taylor, were the only children of a London solicitor of great reputed wealth, and in high and extensive business. The little boys were, James at five, and Richard at three years old, left motherless. They lived in a pretty cottage near Guildford, which belonged to their father. When Nurse Wilks was in good humour, she would tell them, their father was the richest gentleman in all London, among the Christians; and if in bad humour, from such causes as dirty pinafores and muddy shoes, that he was going to be married to a lord's daughter, who would snub them; mentioning, at the same time, the name of a nobleman high in office, who was reckoned the patron of Mr Taylor. One

day when the little boys were at play in the garden, Nurse Wilks rushed out to them, crying aloud that their papa had shot himself with a pistol; that the cottage was to be sold, and they were to get new mourning, though whether there would be any for the servants she could not tell. In circles better informed than that of Mrs Wilks, it was said that the unhappy insolvent had been involved in disgrace, as well as pecuniary difficulty, by speculating in the Funds with money belonging to his clients, and trusting to information received from his official patron, who made this use of place to benefit his own pocket,—though he would have disdained the imputation of peculating on the public. Dame Wilks went a hop-picking without her wages. The little boys were for a short time boarded at a cheap school, by the charity of their father's noble friend; and by the same interest were admitted into the Blue-Coat Hospital, which seminary James left for the chambers of a solicitor, who had been one of his father's principal clerks; and Richard for a counting-house in the city. The brothers had never till now been separated; and they had loved each other the better that each was all the other had to love. Twelve years had exhausted the kindness of all their father's former friends, if he had ever had any; besides, as was truly said, the boys were, by the benevolence of Lord ———, most satisfactorily established. In process of time, Richard went to Dantzick, as an agent for the house in which he was bred; and afterwards to Leghorn, where the same great firm had established a kind of entrepôt for their extensive Levant and Italian traffic. About the close of the war he had been for some years a partner in that house, and high in the esteem of his associates. At the age of twenty-four, he was said to be worth £24,000; and set down as a bold and fortunate speculator, an intelligent and a liberal merchant. His brother had lately married the only child of his master and succeeded to his business; and no two more prosperous men, for their standing, could be pointed out than the orphan children of the suicide. Of his fast-increasing fortune, Richard had made a small investment in England, which yielded £100 a-year; which sum the munificent merchant allowed for toys to his brother's nursery; aware, however, that his sister Anne had more good sense than to interpret the order literally. About the same time he bought the lease, and settled on Nurse Wilks the house which her married daughter occupied in that conglomeration of buildings, streets, lanes, alleys, and yards, between the middle of the Strand and the river, reserving for his own use the chambers he now occupied in it, should he ever require them. This was done to lessen the ostentation of such a gift; and from no hope, no fear, that he should ever be driven to seek in this place an asylum from adverse fortune.

The Revolutionary war was still in progress. Italy had been overrun and conquered. Richard, at this time an open and ardent admirer of the French, became suspected by the Tuscan government, and only escaped imprisonment, if not death, by finding refuge on board an English frigate. That asylum was granted to the liberal and hospitable English merchant which would have been refused to a man of his known principles who had no such claims on his countrymen. The suddenness of his flight, and many concurring circumstances connected with the invasion of the country, the total suspension of trade, and the destruction of confidence among commercial men, threw the affairs of the firm into great confusion. It was in fact insolvent; and, to crown the misfortune, Mr Taylor, in the hurry of escape, lost all the books and papers of the company. They were stolen, he could not have a doubt of it, as his first and last care had been their safety, till he saw the hamper, in which they were hastily packed, placed in the boat which took him to the side of the frigate. He was like a man distracted on missing them, and entreated at all hazards to be set on shore; but, with this request, the safety of the vessel and the interests of the service forbade compliance. Richard had been prepared for ruin, utter ruin; but here there was disgrace, — the disgrace of culpable negligence, — and room for the suspicion of failure in that high integrity which was his pride.

Mr James Taylor, on receiving a letter from the captain of the frigate, which, however cautiously worded, filled him and his wife with inexpressible alarm, hurried down to Plymouth, and found his brother in a condition most trying to his fraternal feelings. The catastrophe of their father took possession of James's mind. He neither durst disclose his apprehensions to Richard, nor yet lose sight of him for a moment, day nor night. It was Richard, the silent, moody Richard, whose hair sorrow had suddenly blanched, and whose emaciated person and sunken features told the tale his lips refused to utter, that first entered upon the trying topic.

"When do you go to town, James? At this season I know you can ill be spared from business; my sister's health, you say, has been delicate. When do you return to Anne?"

"The moment you are ready," replied James, with forced cheerfulness. "You are in better spirits to-day, Richard; you look more yourself. Be a man, Dick, and no fear of us. Shall I take places for London by the mail? Or, stay,—better have a chaise to ourselves, where we can talk freely; you look as if you needed a lean to your back." James said this with his natural smile, the look which Richard liked in his brother.

"I must learn to sit upright, though," he replied: "upright, alone; and you shall not waste more time in propping me. I must leave this, but I cannot go to London. I must have quiet—time to think, time to think, James."

James believed that the less he thought the better; but his entreaties were useless, and he desisted for that time.

On the third day, Richard, in whose character there was a rich fund of humour, depressed and despairing as he was, became amused by the drolly perplexed countenance of his brother; which wife, children, and business pulled one way, and strong fraternal affection, and tormenting fears, the other. If they walked on the pier, or near the water's edge, James involuntarily grasped Richard's arm, as if he expected him to make a sudden spring and plunge. Fearful of irritating the bruised mind, he was hour by hour inventing excuses to delay his own departure, which provoked Richard to smiles. He must see all the docks; he could not go back to Anne without being able to describe the romantic beauties of Mount Edgecumbe. He would visit Dartmoor; it was doubtful when so good an opportunity would offer; ay, and climb Hengist Down, and perhaps explore the banks of the Tamar. How fraught with thoughtful meanings, with warm and grateful feelings, was the sad smile, humorous and tender, with which Richard listened to this random talk of his affectionate, single-minded brother; for James, be it known,—and he cared little who knew it,—was much better acquainted with the forms and boundaries of English law; its barren wastes, and misty pinnacles, and crooked and thorny paths, than with the local scenery of England; for which, even in these touring times, he entertained a happy indifference. As they walked about daily in the beautiful environs of Plymouth, James affected to make notes of what he observed; though he would not move a step in any direction, unless his arm was locked in Richard's.

On the fourth or fifth day of this fettered intercourse, the brothers sat together by the water's edge. Richard had seen James receive, among a huge packet of business letters, *per mail*, not *per post*, (for there was no Rowland Hill in those days,) one addressed in the handwriting of Anne, which, strange to say, was not handed over to him as soon as perused by her husband. This had been the practice of former days. All these epistles, various in quality, appearance, object, and style, had been huddled up, the moment that Richard took his hat to give his brother leisure to read and answer them. They now sat in silence for a quarter of an hour: the mind of James probably in London; that of Richard, rapidly traversing his whole path in life, from the cottage of Dame Wilks to the deck of the frigate, where the rain had drenched, the night-dews cooled, his fevered frame, and where he had communed with his own heart more earnestly than during all his former life. That firm and yet tender heart smote him now as he looked stealthily upon the troubled countenance of his affectionate watchman: smote him for the selfish, misanthropic bitterness, which thus sorely tried the love o his best friend, and that friend his only brother. The dark cloud had broken up, and was drifting off; but there were still fragments and trails of it hovering about the mind of Richard.

"You have seen all the sights now, I fancy?" said he: "good note taken of them?" There was a ray of Richard's old humour in his eye, a tone of Richard's old, frank kindness in his voice; and James looked brightly up. "Suppose you go home now, James." This was a damper. "You never were so long away from Anne since you married, I presume?"

"O, yes, I have; in the middle of a term, too. If you were well, Richard——"

"Well!—am I not perfectly well? How many compliments have you not paid me on my good looks during these last three days?"

Poor James! If the reader can remember Lord Althorp, ten or twelve years ago, pressed by days and dates, and the very words of an old forgotten speech faithfully reflected in the "Mirror of Parliament," a machinery sometimes holding up reflections as disagreeable and provoking, as ever did looking-glass to an ancient beauty, he may form some notion of the manner in which James related an

anecdote, which Richard, if himself, would have enjoyed so much. It was of his old acquaintance, whimsical Miss Lambert; a maiden of large fortune, who had sent for James to Bath, because she would have no one to draw out her nineteenth will, but Mr James Taylor; and had kept him waiting nine days, whilst she changed her mind eighteen times. "The perverse woman wanted to be coaxed into making our little Dick her heir. She was his uncle Dick's godmother—a bad custom of our Church this, by the way, which perpetuates many very troublesome connexions."

"And the *attorney*, Dick's father, would not have it so?"

"No!" said James gruffly, in a voice which if it had not been sulky, would have betrayed the speaker, who now felt a little choked.

"How can I droll with this kind being," was the quick thought of Richard; and there was another long silence, before Richard said in an earnest and quite natural tone, "My sister wrote you to-day—to come home was it not?"

"Quite the reverse," replied James, with his Althorpian air,—false, certainly, but what no candid man would call deceitful. "Anne is delighted that I am with you, enjoying myself in so fine a part of the country. She only wishes she were with us; but no haste for *us*. She is making pleasant excursions every where with the children."

"Show me her letter—you wont to give me all Anne's letters."

James looked more Althorpian than ever. —Having chanced on so apt an illustration we cannot afford to drop it.—He faltered, looked perplexed, distressed,—searched his pockets; "Perhaps he had left it within: it contained some trifling matters of private business."—There was another pause, while James concocted (he did not fabricate) an appendix to the letter. "Anne, I assure you, does not wish me home. She says, I need not come without Richard, on pain of returning. I thought Dick," added the brother, in a tone of affectionate reproach, "that, after five years, you, who seemed so fond of them, would have liked to see my wife and her children."

Richard compressed his lips, gulped, choked, swallowed down the feelings which, in a man less proud, would have been expressed in a groan or sigh of anguish and tenderness; and hurriedly said what else had not been uttered at all.

"James, why don't you frankly tell me I am mad,—and that you think so?"

"Mad, Richard!—What on earth—on this earth, Richard, can put such wild fancies into your brain? But—" and James tried to laugh—"you know it was always said at school you were to be a poet; like Coleridge, you know, or Charles Lamb, or that old set of us—Mad!"

"Ay, mad—meditating self-destruction!" cried Richard in a tone bordering on madness—but which yet seemed, even to his suspicious brother, only the fearful energy of roused passions.

"Richard, my dear brother, this passes a jest with us—with the recollection of our poor father. Let us walk, Richard, pray: I thank God there is no hereditary disease of any kind in our family. Our poor father—he was hard pressed. In my mind the less a man has to do with these lords the better, save in the way of fair business. Anne will have something to tell you about these things when we get home. But, Richard, there is a temporary madness—when men, forsaken of reason, are in a moment guilty of they know not what. On your courage, your manliness, your high sense of man's worth, and man's duty, I have had reliance which should quiet all apprehensions, terribly as you have been harrowed."——

"Yet you won't leave with me a razor or a penknife," interrupted Richard, bitterly; "ye tremble at the sudden flash of a little instrument like this!"

Mr James Taylor, though he had engrossed all the phlegm of the Taylor blood, leaving his brother its fire and nervous excitability, became pale as death, as he clutched and tried to strike down the pistol which Richard drew from his breast, and steadily fired off.

"It was not even loaded," he said. He gave the pistol into his brother's trembling hands. "I am not mad, James—I am not of the kind of men who run mad. I have purposes in life to fulfil. I shall neither die nor go mad; but I know best what is good for me. Are you now ready to set out for London? My home is with Nurse Wilks,—but for one hour I will break my rule to thank Anne for the kindness which extends your leave." Mr James Taylor groped hastily in his pockets, and now found his wife's letter, and without a word placed it in Richard's hands; who fell back, free at last from his brother's affectionate grasp, to read what Anne said. When he again advanced, he quietly took his brother's arm,

saying, in a very low voice, with no great apparent emotion, yet more consciousness of betrayed feeling than an Englishman cares to show, "Those who have brothers and sisters like James and Anne don't shoot themselves. I will keep Anne's letter."

In three more days Richard had seen his sister, and seemed tolerably cheerful; but there lay a crushing load on the heart and spirit of the broken merchant,—bankrupt alike in fortune, and, as he fancied, in reputation,—which the buoyant energy of his natural character could not, all at once, shake off. He was not mad, but spell-bound; struggling as if with a moral nightmare, conscious of the paltry cause of the exquisite agony under which he writhed, which paralyzed the strength, and checked the wholesome current of life, but condemned him to struggle on.

"Better madness, or death itself," said James, one day that he returned from visiting his brother, in answer to the anxious questioning of his wife. "He becomes more spectral every day; sitting with sheets of figures before him, the image of concentrated misery." James next spoke of what Dr Palmer had said of *needful restraint;* but the gentle Anne still implored patience, quiet, and indulgence of Richard's most wayward moods. Thus passed the winter; when Mrs James Taylor, one morning towards its close, heard a strange gabbling in her hall, and presently a man, a savage the maids said, burst upon her in spite of her servant, carrying a torn hamper, which she almost screamed with delight to understand contained Richard's missing papers and accompt books. This faithful Calabrese, whom, while they were in some measure equally foreigners and strangers in Leghorn, Richard Taylor had treated with that common humanity which sunk deeply into the neglected man's heart, had, with great personal trouble, recovered these missing papers. All that he had lost, ten times told, could not have so much rejoiced Richard Taylor. That was fortune: here were the means of establishing the integrity which it was in vain to assure him no one ever doubted. After some months of hard labour he had the satisfaction of putting the affairs of the firm into such train that there was a likelihood every creditor would be fully paid. It was, however, nearly three years before his toils relaxed and all arrangements were completed. In this time he had made several voyages. The creditors, English and foreign, with the most liberal testimonies to his probity and zeal, would have presented him with money to begin the world again, and offered him credit to any amount. These generous offers he declined, though he now looked as well in health and spirits, and as fit for labour as any man; walked a dozen miles a-day, and slept, in his own phrase, like a boy after a supper of bread and milk. His former partners, and other mercantile capitalists who knew the value of his abilities, his skill in modern languages, and intimate knowledge of European commerce, would have persuaded him to recommence with them; but to the mortification of his brother, who affectionately remonstrated against his resolution, Richard resisted all such proposals.

"Say no more, James," he would reply. "You love me well, but do not quite understand me: Anne reads me closer. Once you were in agony lest I should shoot myself; now you are afraid I shall die not rich. I have enough for all my wants—nay, more—for all my desires. A wise man who has been in my condition, has but one remaining wish —Peace, peace of mind. Add the wealth of Rothschild to that of the Barings, join the *Bourse* to the Stock Exchange, and I am proof."

"And have you then no ambition, Richard —no sense of duty—no wish to realize your once ardent desire of doing good—no love of independence? With your paltry miserable pittance!"

James waxed warm and wrothful, and choked upon his anger; and Richard calmly smiled.

"Enough for me, James. Be assured I made my calculations rigidly and nicely before I struck my final balance. Independence is to me as needful as the air I breathe; 'tis the lungs of my moral existence. I am independent! No sense of duty reprehends me for standing by an idle, and yet not all idle, spectator, seeing the mad world play its own game, I holding no stake. Let no man whatever,—not even you, James, flatter himself the world cannot carry on its game and its business without him. All the Tories in England believed the globe would stop revolving on its axis when Pitt was worn out of life in their hard service; but *a sense of duty* made Perceval accept of office; and he did wondrous well till *duty* again gave us Lord Castlereagh. Then came poor Canning, urged by *duty*, too, and soon broke a Man's heart:—and still the world goes on. No, no; the struggle to make Dick Taylor a

rich Turkey merchant, instead of Tom, or John, or Bob Something-else—a struggle, too, which dooms him either to live in torture or sink into callousness, and perhaps perish at last—is not worth his while. I am done with speculation, and with trade,—but not with life."

For months—nay years—the battle was renewed at intervals between the brothers,—Anne, though she regretted her brother's obstinacy, acting ever as the gentle peacemaker. When Richard, at any time, by his clear head, his knowledge and sagacity, cleared the intricacies of business to his brother, James, in a fit of mingled anger and admiration, would burst forth: "There is a man might be Chancellor of the Exchequer; and his matchless abilities must be lost for a crotchet!"—and he would denounce Richard's *selfish*, narrow, *idling*, scheme of life, epithets at which his brother only smiled, denying idleness: there was not, indeed, a busier man in London, or one who saw, observed, and noted more, than Richard Taylor.

"But to what use?"

"You will find that out by-and-by. I intend to strike out in an original line—a Reformer, Sir."

"Fine subject for drolling, truly!" said the half-angry James. "No, Dick; stick by us Tories, and we'll try to get you made dragoman to the Bow Street Office;" and the lawyer, who had heard of Richard's exhibitions there, now laughed heartily at his own bad joke.

"I have done some good even there: with my bad *Lingua Franca*, and other worse dialects, had I a touch of the Malay, or of any *lingo* that could enable me to help out these miserable Lascars. How the beauties and tender mercies of English law, and of the London *Cadis*, must astonish these poor Asiatics! What stories they must have to tell of us in the Indian Islands, and the Peninsula of India! What a volume it would be, that would give us the frank, unbiassed opinions, not of Europeans and Americans—they are all near of kin—but of Chinese, Turks, Esquimaux, and New Zealanders, of our manners and institutions!"

"Which you are to reform—"

"Not the institutions; I leave them to—the wisdom of Parliament. I am a domestic, an in-door reformer. Could I once proselytize all the women and children, I doubt not but I should soon wield the fierce masculine democracy, as far as I wish."

Mr Richard Taylor, or, "The Gentleman with the Umbrella," had now lived for a number of years in London in this singular way; his friends said singular, though thousands of small annuitants follow apparently a similar line of life. The men called him a Character, or a Humorist; the ladies, an Oddity. He was a great favourite with a certain class of clever young men. Them he assured, that his great secret of happiness and independence, lay in having at once set himself above the mean misery of what is called *keeping up appearances*. But he would sigh as he added, "You, lads, dare not play my game. You are striving to rise, poor fellows! in your professions; the strong hand, the crushing, iron hand of custom is upon you. How charmingly, now, would that poor Pennant have filled up this outline of his "History of the Literature of the Last Century," had not that tailor's bill come against him—though a man of energy will not be idle even in the Fleet:—and, I daresay, save for *appearances*,—to make a figure in the great, squinting, goggle eyes of the public, the poor lad never would have run up this bill, and would have been quite as happy scribbling in his old coat."

As Mr Richard Taylor became older, his favourite study was more than ever domestic manners and economy. He left politicians to discover what ruins states—he was content to know what ruined families.

His acquaintance insensibly extended among respectable families of middle rank, as his young friends married; and his age, and character of a benevolent humorist, privileged him among all housemaids, nursemaids, washerwomen, and charwomen. No man knew London better, to the most black and hidden recesses of its mighty heart. Having the key to All Max in the East, he read by it, fluently and pretty accurately, Almacks in the West. "Courts!" he would say; "every man who can read may know them far better than the flutterers and flatterers living in and about them. The saloons of aristocracy! what is there new in them? The petty mystery reproduced in the new mode; the actors the same, all but in name."

Mr Richard might, had he so chosen, have been a constant diner-out. His garb, scrupulously neat and clean, was always glossy enough to pass with the sensible mistress of any respectable family, especially in *a character*. He did say odd things, some ladies thought; but he had qualities to counterbalance this startling habit: he kept early hours; the children liked him; several dis-

tinguished people were known to be of his acquaintance; he was a water-drinker. With these qualities he might have dined out every day of the week, and three times every day.

"I won't dine with a man I don't like," he would say. "Nay, I must esteem him, too; and I must like his wife also, and be able to endure his children; and, after all, I won't dine with him, unless I am pretty sure he can well afford the good dinner he takes himself every day, and the better which he gives to me and his friends some days. The reverse would be of bad example."

Mr Richard, as he grew older, was punctual in visiting all *brides*. If he had previously liked the husband, or taken an interest in the wife, his second call was a surprise, to take the lady at unawares, when he might judge more fairly of her tastes, her character, and the style of her management.

"Few men," he said, "were entitled to do this, save himself. Few had studied in-door life so thoroughly. It would be unfair for an ignorant jackanapes to pounce upon a young housekeeper in my fashion; but I understand all the exigencies of domestic life. I can allow for washing-day, and comprehend the sweeping of the chimneys." If the *manager* stood his test, he would repeat the visit; or if the *woman* pleased, he would return again. Where both fell far short of his standard; where there were neither the *useful* talents of the housewife, nor the pleasing manners, and teachable and pliant dispositions of the young woman, he dropped the acquaintance, unless he entertained some hope of being useful in improving or totally reforming the almost hopeless subject. His bridal present to the wife of any of his favourite young friends, was a small book, printed but not published, which he called "Richard Taylor's Grammar of Good Housewifery;" and, for the joint use of husband and wife, a copy of the "Philosophy of Arithmetic," by the same author, also unpublished; and, where he "took to visiting," he became the pleasant, steady, safe, and *useful* friend of the young pair; able in any exigency to assist by his knowledge of life and character, and his sagacious counsel; prompt to sympathize in adversity; to stimulate in difficulty; and, what was a nicer task, to temper and moderate rash hopes in a sudden and perilous flow of good fortune at the outset of life. Sensible and amiable women liked and esteemed Mr Richard, after their first fears were over, not the less, perhaps, that his influence was in general thrown into the scale of the wife. This he called the course of justice. His final morning visit every day was paid to his sister Anne, when his brother's family were in town, though he began to feel the distance. They thoroughly understood each other. They were the best of friends; though, as Mrs James grew older, and her husband richer, and her daughters taller, Richard feared the love of the pomps and vanities of the world was stealing on the gentle Anne.

One day during the frost of a severe winter, when the Thames was frozen over for weeks on weeks, Richard went, as usual, to Brunswick Square.

"You did not meet us yesterday at the Franklands'," said Mrs James; "it was a severe disappointment to me—all strangers: and I know you got a card, because it came with ours."

"Ay, and answered it, too, a fortnight ago. *They* could not expect me. I accept of dinners from no man who lives above his income, and beyond that respectable and becoming style warranted by his fortune rather than his prospects."

"You used to like young Frankland."

"I like him still. When I wont to rout him out from his books, and his dingy, airless chamber, to enjoy Nurse Wilks' toast, and my *vista*, I had immense hopes of that lad; which provokes me the more now. He has got a few fees, I grant you; what then? his wife gives two dinners for every brief. And the fine house, and the lady wife, and the lady nursemaid, and the milliner's bill, and the tailor's bill, and the play and opera tickets, and the little trip to Brighton, and the wine-merchant's bill, and the coach-hire—"

"Nay, nay, stop there," cried Anne—

"Without coming to baker, butcher, grocer, or milkman, as poor Frankland must do: to see so admirable a head, so noble a heart, torn, crushed, broken, and cast away thus madly!"

"Let us hope better. Fees may come pouring in; a little flash at the outset is absolutely necessary sometimes."

"Cowardly necessity, mean necessity, base necessity!" cried Mr Richard, passionately.

"They are really a handsome, elegant couple. I don't wonder they should like to have things nice about them. Mrs Frankland looks as if used to it, and like one that *must* have things right and proper;—fine flashy people."

"Anne, *you* accepted of their hospitality."

"Of this entertainment I did," said Mrs

Taylor, smiling at the implied reproach. "Splendid it was: a party of eighteen; rather too many for comfort, but not for economy; a turbot, at Heaven knows what price! I know I have not ventured to speak to my fishmonger on the subject this season; —*ortolans*, or some such foreign rarity; and a magnificent haunch. And such a dessert! I never did see any thing so beautiful and elegant; with wines in number above my reckoning, and in name beyond my knowledge. The house—the set-out altogether! the child's robes! the nursemaid's dress! I wonder you did not, for once, accept your paragon friend Frankland's invitation."

Mr Richard, though compressing his lips, emitted a sound between groan and grumble, before he burst forth—"Unless Frankland's creditors, that are and will be, had joined in the invitation, I don't see how any honest man could have accepted of it: I, for one, could not. In the sparkling champagne I would have seen the dark scowling faces of angry wine-merchants; I would have detected an asp in the pine-apple; a fish-bone would have stuck in my throat as I eat my half-guinea slice of Frankland's salmon; I would have seen the livery-servants metamorphosed into bailiffs; the gentleman in plain clothes into one of the bankruptcy commissioners,—which they unquestionably will be ere long. No, no, Madam; I left my share of the spoil to some fool or foolish knave, who would not fail to be asked to occupy my place; and I dined luxuriously on threepence worth of mackerel, which are prime just now,—as every thing is, thank Heaven! when at the cheapest."

Mrs Taylor was somewhat annoyed. "Then, of course, Richard, you think your brother and I did wrong to go to this dinner, and do wrong to accept of such dinners?"

"Sound logic—a fair inference, sister Anne."

"And what could we do? Mr Frankland has been obliged to James in the line of his profession, and wished to show his sense of it. Is not that quite proper in a young barrister?"

"Quite proper the sense; very improper the manner of showing it."

"You know James would not do a wrong, or an injurious thing for the world. He was, indeed, rather averse to accepting of any dinners at this season, save those we *must take* from old friends."

"There is a necessity!" said Richard; "some *must take;* many *must want.*"

"That pleasant, polite, young Frankland, whom you liked so well, and his very pretty wife," continued the lady, "I could not be so churlish as to refuse; besides, they had visited us. It would have been positively rude."

"Well, Anne," said the gentleman buttoning to the chin, "I suppose I must just pardon your—'Do as other folks do;' the maxim that fills half our prisons. It will be time enough to think more of Frankland when he is in the Bench."—

"Or *on* the Bench," cried Mrs Taylor. "Let us take the best view of it.—No fish to be caught without bait; and some gudgeons won't bite unless it glitter."

"Even in that case success should not excuse to me his present imprudence; the price of the ticket is too high a risk for even the first prize: That price is peace of mind, it is *principle*, sister Anne."

Indignation and grief might have contributed to render Mr Richard's steps unsteady on this afternoon,—for he was warmly attached to Frankland, of whose career he had often prophesied great things,—but at any rate he slid on the ice in going home, and sprained his ankle so severely, that he was kept prisoner in his chamber for three months. His brother and sister-in-law, and several other friends, urged him to become their inmate during his slow recovery, but he would not leave his own lodgings, Nurse Wilks, his *vista*, his lathe, his books, and all his thousand *nick-nacks*. He would be in nobody's way, he said; and he as frankly confessed that he liked nobody in his. He would accept of no pecuniary assistance from his brother. "Do you think I am so bad a calculator and provider as not to know that I may be sick at some time, and require a doctor? And think," he said laughing, "how much I save in shoes!" There was a tinge of misanthropy at the bottom of Richard Taylor's proud character, disguise it as he might. It never deadened his sympathies, never chilled the glow of humanity,—but it lurked there.

In the mean time a man who was a geometer, a geographer, a draughtsman, a mechanic, and, finally, a good classical scholar and universal reader, could not lack amusement during a three months' confinement unattended with much pain of body or mind. Richard Taylor was, besides, that nondescript being, a humorist; and his fancy was a very Proteus. He re-read Swift, a favourite author; a selection of the British Essayists; the works of De Foe and of Fielding, great favourites both; the Farces of Foote, the

Newgate Calendar, and the Lives of the Players. He had a small, a very small selection of more serious books, which he never showed save to choice visiters, such as Frankland the barrister had been.

There were now as many inquiries at and about Richard's *cul de sac* as if a prince had been sick; and the apothecary thought of issuing a regular bulletin. A kind, a very kind, a cordial letter came from Frankland, who had gone down to stand a contested election for some Cornwall borough, and thus could not visit his old friend. It was left by Mrs Frankland, "in her *nown carriage*," Nurse Wilks said; with a note reminding Mr Taylor how much Frankland required the support of his friends at this juncture, and of his own well-known influence with the public press. A few paragraphs did appear for the "*talented* candidate," but none of them were traced to his misanthropic old friend: — none of them had emanated from Richard Taylor.

No man, after the years of studentship, can read for ever; but it was by pure accident that Richard Taylor, to vary his amusements, began to scrawl on an old half-written ledger, characters of his friends, and sketches of his life and his adventures, particularly since he had first run the circle round this alley. Paragraphs insensibly swelled to pages; pages grew to chapters. At the head of one might have been seen written FRANKLAND THE BARRISTER; but that *was not yet full.* Another he called by the odd name of MARY ANNE'S HAIR, and that one was complete. So humble was Richard's estimate of his own literary powers that, if writing had cost him but one groat for quills or ink, he would certainly have renounced the occupation, fancying the money far better bestowed in sending another Irish child for a week to the Dame's school he had contrived to establish in his neighbourhood; but his sister Anne, happy to see that he had found a new amusement, liberally supplied him with stationery from her husband's chambers, an attention he was not too proud to accept.

Many heads were opened in the old blank ledger, but few were filled up. HOUSEHOLD STATISTICS was one; the germ of what afterwards grew to his "Philosophy of Arithmetic." Then came GIN AND GENTILITY, a Tale; and next, YOUNG MRS ROBERTS' THREE CHRISTMAS DINNERS, followed by THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PEG PLUNKET, THE ORANGE WOMAN," an old campaigner who had shared in the glories of the Peninsular war; with whom he had a gossip at the head of the alley every day of his life. Next followed GOVERNOR FOX, a sketch.

"Dick," said Mr James Taylor, as he sat with his brother during morning service, one holiday, and placed his spectacles in the ledger, after a half-hour's perusal of its contents; "Dick, this would print"

"Will it *read* though?" said Richard, smiling.

"I think it may. I have seen my wife have books lying about, almost as great nonsense."

"You are a polite and pleasant person, James, with a happy knack at compliment: but I must have other literary judgments, and less indulgent criticism than yours, of my—my MS. *works.*"

"There is no saying what trash people won't read nowadays, Dick:—just try them. But I would have you be at no expense for printing. I would not promise you that they don't find this—I have not read it—very fine; if you add a few flourishes about sunset, and the sea; and be sure you be bountiful enough, and have a rogue of a lawyer. In a story money costs nothing, and beauty still less: — and all the women look for them."

"You think the modern novelist's calling something like the fortune-teller's?"

"Very like: handsome, gallant husbands, exquisitely beautiful wives, and immense riches; that is the aim and end of all popular novels."

"Then poor Mary Anne won't do: she had none of this dazzling beauty — no fortune: — and for a love— ——"

"Let me see," interrupted Mr James Taylor; and, snatching up the old ledger, he read, as we have already done,

THE EXPERIENCES OF RICHARD TAYLOR.

MARY ANNE'S HAIR.

"'THERE was not a more respected family in our court, nor a more contented and comfortable household, than that of old David Moir, when I knew it first, among the two hundred and fifty thousand families then supposed to form the mighty aggregate of the population of London. This honest man was originally from North Britain, and either a native of Aberdeen or Banffshire —'

"You don't mean old Moir, the porter in C——s's bank?" inquired the attorney.

"I do; and his daughter, my own god-daughter: poor little Mary Anne—she is my heroine."

"Don't risk paper and printing, Dick," said Mr James Taylor emphatically, and

thumping the ledger down. "It would be voted the vulgarest dull stuff — ask Anne — An old bank porter in London, and his daughter! — a most worthy man, no doubt; and she was a very nice little girl — but what to make a story of? Besides —"

Richard would not hear what besides. Like the Archbishop of Granada, wishing his brother all manner of prosperity, he also wished him a little more taste. But he was more offended as a moralist and liberal philosopher than as an author, of which he had indeed never thought till this conversation occurred.

Much was added to the ledger, though no one ever saw it after this. How it finally, along with his Diary, has come into our hands, must remain a secret. Its contents, which are all that is important about it, we mean, from time to time, to submit to the courteous readers of THE EDINBURGH TALES, not, however, hazarding, as a beginning, the story of Mary Anne's Hair, denounced by Mr James Taylor from the lowliness of its heroine; but selecting, in its stead, "Young Mrs Roberts' Three Christmas Dinners," as equally characteristic of Mr Richard Taylor, and more congenial to this festive season.

YOUNG MRS ROBERTS' THREE CHRISTMAS DINNERS.

CHAPTER I.

THOUGH an old bachelor myself, I have always had a fancy for visiting new-married people. I cannot, however, pretend that I have been able to approve of above half the unions my young friends are pleased to form. Yet I am so little of a Malthusian philosopher as never to have been able to comprehend how Jerry Jenkins is to be dissuaded from intermarrying with his beloved Jenny Jones, because their remote posterity may chance to add an inconvenient fraction to the living thirty millions of the British Isles, and probably become a burden, at some time or other, on the parishes of *De-la-mere-cum-Diss.* But whether I approved the marriage or not, where I liked the parties, and the deed was done, I have always found it pleasant to visit them, as soon as the first blush of the affair was over, and the sober household-moon rising over, whether that of pure honey, or of treacle and butter. I like to look upon the first home, however humble, in which the young bride has shrined so many fond hopes; and to witness the effects of the heart-taught taste which has adorned her bower in the brick-and-mortar wilderness. Then there are to be seen the little tokens of the affection and good-will of distant friends, which surround her like tributes and trophies. There is, too, the indescribable flutter of a vanity, now first divided between her own pretty person, decked in its bridal garniture, and her pretty sofas and window curtains; both repressed by the matronly dignity of a woman to whom belongs, of sole right, a certain number of silver spoons, and china cups and saucers, and the whole consolidated by the awful responsibility of her who bears three small *keys of office* upon a steel or silver ring, and has a six inch account book, "to chronicle small beer," locked in a new rosewood eighteen-inch writing desk,—and who, you see by her face, nobly resolves to do her *Duty*, as becomes a married woman, who has the responsibility of laying out money, and of keeping house for herself and another, who may never yet have taken her capacity for domestic management into much account. There may be, nay, there are, many giddy-headed, shallow-hearted creatures, who feel all the vanity, with none of the tremendous responsibility of this condition. My business, at present, is not with them.

It was my good fortune, in 1829, to pay my devoirs to three newly married women, on one frosty October morning; one of them in humble life, the two others in what is called the middle rank of society. Of these marriages I had heartily approved one,— that of my friend Joseph Greene; while I was doubtful of Mr George Roberts' matrimony, and had openly disapproved, and, so far as my advice went, opposed the wedding of Sally Owen. This Welsh girl was educated in a public charity; and, from ten years old to eighteen, lived, first as an apprentice, and then a voluntary servant, under the same roof with myself, enjoying in her early discipline the vigilant superintendence of notable Nurse Wilks. From our abode she went into a better, that is to say, a more lucrative service; but our house she considered her home—her rendezvous on *her Sunday-out*, and in all seasons of trial and difficulty. While with us, Sally was chiefly noticeable as a well-tempered, industrious girl, who

cheerily scrubbed and dusted all day, and sang like a lark, "*Far beyond the Mountains,*" and other Welsh airs. In her new service she became more prudent and less girlish, which increased my concern when she came formally to announce her marriage. No folly that girls like her can possibly commit in the way of matrimony, will ever excite my surprise. Her intended husband was a boot-closer. He could make his couple of guineas a-week, *if he liked to keep steady;* and needed never be out of employment, *if he chose to work.* *Ifs* and *buts* spoil many a good charter: and it proved so with Sally Owen, who wept all night over my warnings and Nurse Wilks' scolding prophecies, and married in the morning in very tolerable spirits.

This was all past by two months or more, and I visited her tidy single room, not to hear more of her husband's faults, but much better pleased to listen to her shy praise of his kindness and *steadiness;* and that in one week he had earned fifty shillings!—and placed it in her hand. I hoped she would take care of it, and so, with good wishes embodying good advice, I left my compliments for Mr Hardy, the extraordinary boot-closer, who could work miracles when he liked; and placed my gift of Franklin's Life on a little rack above Sally's drawers.

Joseph Greene was a member of the Society of Friends. He was the eldest son of my old friend, Joseph Greene the draper, to whose long-established business he had lately succeeded. About the same time a courtship, if such it might be called, of some three or four years' duration, had been brought to a close by Joseph marrying, with the full approbation of all concerned, the eldest daughter of a cloth manufacturer in Yorkshire, who, I need not say, was a member of the same Society. The fair Quaker, I found endowed with a competent share of the comely and intelligent looks which distinguish the females of her beneficent sect. I was pleased with her manners, her conversation, her comfortable and well-arranged abode; pleased, but not yet particularly interested, nor in the least charmed. Perhaps, I was too late of paying my marriage visit to this serenely sensible person, who, for aught that I saw, might have been married for seven years.

So far as human beings may dare to calculate on the course of human events, it was clear that this was to be a *soberly* happy couple, and theirs a flourishing household, established on the sure basis of prudence, mutual esteem, rational affection, competence of the means of a moderate life, perhaps a little romantic *love* also, though for this last I cannot swear; but certainly with a deep and holy sense of the duties and claims of the condition upon which they had deliberately entered, obtained by the discipline of a life, and enforced by the customs of their society, and the sanctions of their peculiar institutions. Chance had thrown my third Bride into the next door of the neat row of new houses, one of which, while their house was building, formed the temporary abode of Joseph and Rachel Greene. She was now the two months' wife of Mr George Roberts, my brother's confidential clerk, whom I had known from a foolish boy,—who had, indeed, grown up with and among us. He was now neither a fool nor a boy; he was, instead, a sensible and singularly acute fellow, above thirty; yet it had pleased him to fall in love, in the previous month of July, with a very pretty young woman, a governess in a school at Hastings, to whom he had chanced to carry a letter, and whom he had seen afterwards at church, and met two or three times during his sea-side sojourn. My brother and his wife, to whom Roberts was more than an ordinary *attaché*, thought the thing a more "foolish affair" than they might have done some twenty years before; but Roberts had certainly a right to please himself,—which he did, by marrying at Michaelmas, and laying out his savings, and probably a little more, in furnishing smartly the house next door, as I have said, to Joseph Greene. He insisted that I should come to see, he did not exactly say to admire, *his* wife and *his* house; and I complied willingly. I had already seen her at a party given by my sister, in honour of "the foolish marriage." She was a lively, and almost a handsome, black-eyed girl, about twenty; and if not what ladies would allow to be fashionable-looking, she was at least showy and dressy; vain enough quite, and occasionally affected in her manners, though not yet wholly incrusted with either the scurf sugar-work or worse frost-work of an incurable affectation. Although the assumed fine *personage* would rise, and obtrusively come between one and the natural woman, it was not yet difficult to doff the shadow aside and come at the real substance.

Mrs George Roberts, like, I fear, ten thousand others of my country-women, had married with little more knowledge of the duties of her new condition, than belonged to the marriage dresses, the cake and cards, her

ring and its brilliant guard, at which she glanced fifty times by the hour, her bracelets and combs, and the other paraphernalia of her rank and state. Yet there was occasionally that about her, which did not bespeak a woman to whom nature had denied either heart or mind, and I hoped she had fallen into tolerably good hands.

In those digital acquirements, named accomplishments, young Mrs Roberts was no mean proficient. She also read French, and a little Italian, and had a natural talent for music, and, moreover, an ill-toned, brass-mounted new cabinet piano-forte, which formed the principal ornament of the small drawing-room, into which I was ushered by a fluttering girl in a wedding cap and top-knot. It was a temple worthy of the goddess; yet the general effect at this time, while every thing wore the gloss and freshness of novelty, was airy, and, so to speak, tasteful—French, or Anglo-Gallican; and I suppressed the cynical idea, forced by an involuntary comparison of this apartment with Rachel Greene's roomy bed-chamber, on the other side of the party-wall,—and the question, "How will all these *flimsies* look two years hence,—mistress included?" At present all was glittering, if not golden; and "brightly blue" muslin draperies, coarse gilding and lacker, and spider-limbed, crazy-jointed chairs and sofas,—painted and varnished in imitation of expensive woods,—made up the inventory, and—all obtained prodigious bargains!

"As we can't afford to give many dinner-parties, it don't much signify for the dining-parlour," said George, with the prudent air so becoming in a young husband. "And as we have only a limited sum to lay out in furniture, we have made any thing do for the family-room down stairs, to have this one nice for Maria's little parties."

"But where the deuce are you to sleep? This is your neighbour Greene's chamber through the wall there. Is your house larger?"

"Self-same every way; but the Greenes have no drawing-room: there is a very good small attic chamber—What signifies where people sleep?"

"Then this is the *show-room.* It really looks pretty to-day,—*umph.*"

"It was so good of Mr Roberts to leave the decorating of this apartment to myself," said the bride. "I so love a bright, delicate, pale, but not too pale, blue." We all looked round us admiringly at chairs, and squabs, and pillows, all "beautifully, brightly blue," and at the flowered muslin curtains, bordered with blue, and at every thing festooned with bunches of "bonny blue ribbons," even to Maria's dark hair. On her varnished work-table, with its blue silk-bag, were blue bell-ropes, the twisting and twining of which formed her present employment. On other tables were volumes of neatly bound little books, and vases of artificial flowers, and cards of wedding guests; and the chimney-piece was profuse of "ladies' work," in its numerous conceits and flimsy varieties. But the most striking, and to me the most provoking part of the details, was the small portable grate, placed within a large bronzed and lackered one, in which smouldered and smoked a few small coal, contrasting dismally, on this chill, lowering day, with the clear-burning fire and cheerful fireside I had left in the next house. I am not yet done with these details. Upon the spider-legged work-table, which a puff of air might have overturned, lay the lady's cambric-laced pocket-handkerchief, bordered by her nicely-clean French gloves, which had been taken off, that she might prosecute the bell-pull industry; and on the handkerchief, a very pretty purse made of gold and purple twist, with a *rich* clasp and tassel; half sovereigns and sixpences glancing brightly through, ready to start forth, prompt to do the hests of the fair owner as long as they lasted. I had no right nor wish to be *sulky,* nor yet to anticipate evil. There was nothing positively wrong, though there might be indications of excess of right. There certainly was nothing irreclaimable, nothing that a year's *tear and wear* of life, with its attendant experience, might not rectify. My friend George was so evidently delighted and charmed with his wife, his house, his domestic happiness and good fortune, that I could not be otherwise. I could also see that the household virtues, with their concomitant vices, were budding already in the thoughtful heart of his bride.

I would have been content with something quieter this morning than the lilac silk frock, one of the principal bridal dresses, and my brother's present, put on to do me honour; but then the motive was so good. Mrs Roberts was already half aware that frugality was a *virtue,* hence the *bad* fire—and industry a *duty,* hence the blue bell-roping, till the poor girl was herself blue with cold.

"You have been calling for our neighbour, Mrs Greene," said Roberts.

"Is she so very pretty?" inquired the lady.

"The Quaker ladies are all imagined so handsome; that odd dress of theirs attracts attention to their faces,—yet I am sure it is not in the least becoming."

"Not in the least, only convenient, and *comfortable as clothing*. I wish their female costume were more elegant. But I beg pardon. My friend Joseph's wife is not *very* pretty. She looks the mild, intelligent, amiable young woman which I am certain she is. Her face is very *English*, both in features, and in its serene beauty of expression,—the real, not the *beau-ideal*, English beauty of modern artists."

"The Quakers are not musical, I believe?"

"No?—I am sorry they are not.—I do not mean exactly musical, that is now an odious hackneyed phrase; but that those whom Nature has attuned to the harmonies of sound, are not allowed to follow her bent. There can be no true wisdom in obliterating the gift of a fine ear, or a delicious voice, because it may sometimes be abused. Rachel Greene has a small bookcase in her chamber, where your piano-forte stands. I should like to see both where there is taste and leisure."

"They seem to have very nice furniture though; very *expensive* furniture," rejoined the lady. The subject had become of importance to the young housekeeper, with whom sofas and tables were fairly dividing empire with gowns and bonnets, and threatened to subvert their reign.

"Perhaps the Quakers think dear things cheapest. They have excellent, substantial, and even handsome mahogany furniture in sufficient quantity. This *tasty* little drawing-room corresponds to their family chamber. They have no flowery muslin draperies,—gilding or imitation work:—black hair-cloth chairs, and couches; and window curtains, and carpets of some warm colour and substantial fabric—I cannot tell you what all they have."

"And they have no best room," cried Mrs Roberts, glancing round with triumph on her arrangements.

"They have, and keep it for themselves," cried George laughing. "That is so like Broadbrim."

"I presume they may imagine themselves best entitled to the use of their own house. 'Greatest-happiness principle,'—hey George! Sleep in a dog-hole all the year round, to have a handsome apartment to receive one's pleasant idle friends, once a-month or so."

"One can't do without *one* apartment to keep neat for company. Roberts insists on making this our ordinary sitting-room; but as it is fitted up, that cannot *prudently* be."

I admired the emphasis, and did not despair of Mrs Roberts yet comprehending the true import of the word graced with it. Another trifling incident I noted. Rachel Greene had herself taken from her small sideboard the glasses and bright *silver* salver required when the refreshment of cake and a glass of wine was offered me. She had but one servant-girl, who had come up with her from Yorkshire. Maria Roberts had exactly the same complement of domestic help; but the temporary bell-pull gave way, in sounding the alarum to the kitchen for the supply of our wants, and considerable bustle, misunderstanding, and delay occurred, before the gaudy japan equipage was forthcoming. When I took leave, Roberts told me laughingly, that I must come often to lecture his wife. I had a foreboding that the lectures might be required sooner than he anticipated. The question with me was, did Mrs Roberts seem a woman likely to profit by elder experience in league with her own; and as I saw no reason to despair of her, but in her energy, activity, and liveliness quite the reverse, I frequently repeated my visits, and always found her busily employed in one useless way or another.

The first grand marriage-dinner followed close on the completion of the fittings-up, the covering of the ottoman with blue, and the suspension of the blue bell-ropes. I could not resist it. My brother's wife, with prudent consideration of a very small house, took only one daughter to represent the five who were to appear at tea. Mrs Roberts had spared neither time, nor thought, nor labour. She had given her orders with spirit; and freely drawn upon the thrice-replenished gold and purple purse. The result was, every thing considered, and fair allowance made, a very *genteel entertainment*. True, we were sadly crowded:—many things were forgotten, several lacked of the thousand-and-one requisites necessary to English *stylish* dinners; and there occurred numerous casualties. Several compulsory levies were made during dinner on the glass and plate stores of Rachel Greene. But, on the whole, though the thing did not work so well, where *hired* cook, *hired* footman, *hired* charwoman, hired every thing, were strange and awkward, as where there is a well-drilled establishment, we got through the day, without affording materials to Theodore Hook for a piquant

do to me, a delightful Duty. I have of late taken a great fancy to watch children. I wish Friend Roberts and I were better neighbours. I used to love to hear her through the party-wall singing her hymns and psalms; but I think she has given that up." Here was unexpected liberality. Perhaps Maria's music might be only Italian melodies or opera songs; but I was not going to tell that to Rachel. Maria could not accompany us; she regretted it sincerely; "but all this must be done before dinner." She was making up a head-dress for an evening party — to save money — "You would not have me desert my *duty?*"

"Certainly not; but think beforehand I would have you, of the kind of duties you lay upon yourself." Maria watched our return, and tapped on the window as soon as I had left my fair friend within doors. "O, that sweet, serene Rachel Greene," she cried, half laughing; "how I do envy her!"

"Had you seen her in the last hour you might."

"Nay, I shall be jealous too. Roberts gets as bad as yourself; we shall have green-eyed monsters among us I can tell you, if we cannot be more Greene."

"Why not be as *Greene* as is desirable."

"Is it the soft vernal grass, or bright apple, or brilliant emerald green you would have me? Really, Mr Richard, you would not wish me to turn Quaker?"

"Clearly not, unless your reason and conscience bid you: I don't intend to turn Quaker myself, but I would like to see you turn a *Rational*, for which I am sure nature intended you, Maria; and from the Friends you may obtain excellent hints. With what you call your limited income, how much comfort and leisure a Quaker family could command; but how much more enjoyment could you command with your accomplishments and taste." There was, with me, one decided superiority which Maria held over my friend Rachel. Her different mode of education, and scope of reading and lively fancy, made her understand all my allusions, whether playful or sarcastic. This had at once established a certain intelligence and sympathy between us, even when we quarrelled. But if Rachel did not always perceive the point of my illustrations, Maria was far more backward in apprehending the force of my reasoning, when directed against her own notions and practices. It was in vain that I strove to convince her that the household god she had set up under the name of Duty, was an ugly misshapen idol, blubber-lipped and with squinting eyes, consuming the time and wealth of its votaries in the besotted rites of a stupid and blinded idolatry. In vain I talked to her of the slavery to which she was hourly condemning herself. She could not yet renounce her idol-worship.

"I wish we were as rich as the Greenes, Mr Richard," said she, "and then I should be so happy to visit your Infant School, or walk, or read, or be social: — but at present ——"

"Why, at present you spend more money than Rachel Greene."

"You don't say so! This last to be sure has been a dreadfully extravagant year; the outset always must; and that shockingly expensive dinner!"

"I can at once tell you what Rachel Greene's housekeeping cost in the last twelve months."

"Does she talk to you of her family affairs? I thought that had been indelicate, improper, in money concerns."

"So English people in general seem to think. Money is the only thing of which they must not speak,—because they are eternally thinking of it, because it occupies their whole souls, and because, poor creatures! they really feel it a disgrace and crime not to have a very great deal of filthy lucre—or what is thought a great deal for them. Why else may not people talk with as much candour and frankness about their incomes as they do about their children, or any thing else nearly pertaining to them."

"Family matters! Mr Richard?"

"Ay, family matters is the word. Be assured, Maria, it is either selfishness, insincerity, or coldness, that prevents *family matters* from being the topic most frequently talked over of all matters between true friends. These are interests, which, above all others, 'come home to *women's* business and bosoms.'"—(*A long deep sigh—followed by a pause.*)

"I believe that, Mr Richard: but you perceive how the world goes—"

"The world of England?"——

"All one sees, hears, or reads, forbids the sort of frankness, and the notions you hold. No one writes a book on education, on domestic morals, on household economy, or even on cookery, but what is adapted to wealthy persons,—Miss Edgeworth and Rousseau included. Their systems are all concocted for people worth at least £500 a-year: and they require much more."

"I wish we had better elementary or guide-books, Maria. Your remark is acute, and far more just than many that are made by the critics on these works. HANNAH MORE was an honest woman, when she said *Hints for the Education of a young Princess*, limiting her book to one individual. All works on education hitherto published, ought, in common honesty, to be entitled, *Treatises for Training the children of the Rich:* or Books of counsel for the Wealthy. We have no systems for the *Many*—but still we have our 'old experience'—"

"To what does it *attain* in my case, sir?" My young friend smiled upon me with so much sweet earnestness, that I could not help vowing my best efforts to aid in solving her difficulty.

"With given *data* to something like absolute certainty, Maria. For example, how much domestic comfort of the extrinsic kind, a family of three or four persons in London may secure for £200 a-year. Or take any British or Irish town, and vary our estimates from 15 to 25 per cent. You won't live £25 per cent cheaper in Kerry or Shetland than in London, believe me, Maria—nor in any Continental town I ever knew; though you may vary your style of living, you may *retrench.* If London is not a *cheap* place, to those who wish to make it so, then is the division of labour a mockery,—cheap carriage and the principle of *competition* all *humbug.* But London *is* a *cheap* place, cheaper than Boulogne, or the Norman Islands, if you please to exercise your understanding aright, —and exorcise, cast out, the Demon *Fashion*, and the Imp *Style.*"

"To return to the *data*, Mr Richard," said my fair friend. She really stuck better to a text than most women.

"The *data*, madam, in the present case, is £197, 15s. 8½d.—I found it in Rachel Greene's little book."

"Sordid creatures!" exclaimed Mrs Roberts, "with an income like theirs to spend so little! For what do they hoard?"

"You are unjust, Maria. You take their highest rate of income. So do all enterprising gentlemen who afterwards grace the bankrupt list. My friend Joseph Greene's income, unlike my friend Mr Roberts', is fluctuating. This year his profits may be £500; next year £150, or less. Bad times have come on all retail dealers, and threaten to continue. His father made much more money in the same trade and shop. Now, Joseph and his wife in their honeymoon — —"

"A Quaker honeymoon!" cried Maria, in scornful mirth. "Fancy a pair of Quaker turtles!" (*a scornful hollow laugh.*)

"Call it what you will, Mrs Roberts; it was the time of the first sensible, prudent, affectionate, and confidential talk between my friends, Joseph and Rachel Greene, by their own fireside, in the first month of their marriage: then and there they struck the average of the profits of our friend Joseph's trade, and resolved that £200 a-year was all that could at present be reasonably afforded for household expenses."

"Sordid!" again exclaimed Maria.

"Far from it. The only circumstance I ever heard Rachel Greene regret—and she speaks most frankly of her means of life, not considering that there is any difference between £50 a-year and £50,000, where each is the sole product of honest industry and diligence—is, that she cannot know exactly at the end of each year how much is over—to be laid up, as she said, 'where moth and rust cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through.' She already guesses, I suspect, that our friend Joseph admires a different kind of investment. All her own savings, I know, she devotes to deeds of benevolence. Her heart, like the hearts of most women, is naturally compassionate. She even gives to common beggars, and forgets the far-seeing wisdom of her sect, and of the political economists. One day I checked her. 'Alas!' was her reply, 'that poor old man's pale, emaciated face tells me a true story. Shall not we *women* apply the lenitive, till you *philosophers* cure the distemper: because that poor man may perhaps be so far an impostor, shall I harden my heart against my fellow-creature—my fellow-immortal? Him who, as a Christian I am bound to hope, will share the joys of heaven with me,—shall I withhold from him my wretched pittance on earth? Is this to do the will of Him who maketh his sun to shine and his rain to descend, alike upon the just and the unjust?'"

"Amiable woman! I was base to doubt her worth," cried my young friend, in whose eyes tears had gathered. "How shall I resemble her? Where learn like her to know and do my duty?"

However unfit I may be to give counsel, I am not the man to hear such an appeal with indifference.

"I have been surprised," I continued, "to find how nearly Friend Rachel hit the mark in her expenditure. But she would not spend more — did not wish to spend much less. She

has an excellent idea of the prices and values of all ordinary commodities, and of how much of every thing is required in a family of a certain number; and this knowledge she possesses along with the domestic discipline, frugality, and good management, which the uniform, regular habits of the Quakers, and of many quiet English families, give their women, as it were, by hereditary right."

"Management!" Maria's ear mechanically caught the word. "Can you explain to me Mrs Greene's system?"

"I cannot—probably it is not what you would call a system.

A few good instincts, and a few plain rules,

Maria, derived from her Yorkshire granddames. 'Economy,' says Johnson,—no economist himself,—'is a very nice thing—one man's coat wears out much sooner than another's.' Neatness, regularity—above all, order, and the absence of every sort of pretension, must be essential to her system. I believe that young housekeepers often fail from want of knowledge of the principles of arithmetic."

"Of ciphering, Mr Richard? Nay, I can challenge the whole Quaker and housekeeping world there! I got three prizes at school for ciphering."

"But can you apply your knowledge, fair lady? Can you tell me in a moment how much a young couple, whose annual income is under £300 a-year—call it for safety £270—may afford to expend on one dinner? Come, now, by any rule you please? *Experience*—*Practice* is best—I mean without forestalling their income, an increase of their family rendering a certain enlargement of expenditure necessary." Poor Maria fluttered and coloured, tears again gathering to her eyes. I cannot say whether *management* or maternity now preponderated in her heart.

"I cannot yet tell; but I fear not so much as this." She had unlocked the little desk, and taken out the *book* so thumbed and studied, and so mysterious in the frightful totals which it cast up out *of nothing*. To me the amount was at least not astonishing, as I was quite aware to what an enormous expense her absurdly extravagant Christmas Dinner must have come; the soups, the fish, the game, the jellies, the creams, the dessert, the wines, the hundred-and-one incidental charges, which any woman less clever and anxious to probe to the bottom of the evil would have overlooked or slurred over; but which here stood in a formidable array of figures. *Plunder* ought to have formed a considerable *item*, I dare say; but it was not entered under this head. It is always fortunate to make a good smashing loss at once, which may startle one, and put one on one's guard. "£18, 5s. 3d.; well, I don't think that so far out of the way, considering the good *style* in which the thing was done. Some things appear very reasonable,—other items extravagant enough. A monstrous quantity of Epping butter; but good cookery requires good oiling; nothing in the world goes sweetly at first without it."

"And we gave a very nice, genteel evening party with the left things—ham, cakes, jellies, and other things."

"And that is a *per contra*."

"Oh! Mr Richard, a *per contra* to this abominable bill! No, no!—I am grieved and ashamed to look at it. How useful to me were half that money at present to get decencies and necessary comforts: no wonder Roberts says I cannot manage." This was unlooked-for humility. "I dare say Mrs Greene would have given half-a-dozen dinners with that money?"

"Probably a whole dozen, Maria, all good of their kind, too; but then the party would have been small, in conformity to the house, the attendants, the income, the number of *real* friends,—to economy, good sense, and true social enjoyment."

"I see it all, Mr Richard; Roberts was right in saying I can manage no more than a baby—no more than a baby! Think of that, sir; you who have seen how I have laboured for eight months out of the twelve I have been here, injuring my health, as you have told me often, and spending almost nothing upon myself:—to be sure, I was fully equipped last year. I declare, when I have been chilled to death, tortured with chilblains, and threatened with rheumatism, I have denied myself a shovel of coals in my chamber, to economize; while Mrs Greene has a good fire every cold evening, and her chamber so much more comfortable than mine, as they have no drawing-room; but let the Quaker ladies alone for taking care of themselves."

"To how much does *almost nothing* come, Maria?" was my rejoinder. "You must forgive my freedom, since you invite my counsel. Let us see."—The little book was again produced. I was aware of one *irresistible* French summer bonnet and scarf, and an indispensable autumn evening shawl; but as it turned out, there were fifty other trifles, bits of lace, and joining lace, morsels of ribbon,

scraps of gauze, gloves, shoes, &c. &c. that came, when summed up, to above £8. Maria was in astonishment. Her dexterous ciphering had never suggested any thing like this. "What you say of my friend Rachel's extravagance in fire and *comfort*, is quite like her good sense. She keeps possession of her own house for her own self; lives to her own feelings, her own conscience, even to her own comfortable bodily sensations, rather than to idle people's eyes, or to fashion and vanity; and is she not right?"

"That Mrs Pantague almost made me buy that bonnet and scarf, one day that she did me the honour to introduce me to her own *milliner*. I know it was wrong, too, to purchase *French* things. We should encourage the lace-makers and embroideresses of our own country."

I smiled involuntarily. "Now," she continued, "the Quaker ladies give no encouragement to the industry of their own sex. They wear no lace, embroidery, or fancy articles. And, surely it is right for women to encourage the industry of their own sex; and all ladies, you say, have a right to buy whatever they like and can afford."

"Which conscience and understanding approve: — clearly, Maria."

"Now, were we all to turn Quakers, the whole factory-women would be thrown idle, with all the lace-workers."

"Not idle; only differently, and, I am sure, better employed, in their own households, as daughters, wives, and mothers, for such rational length of time daily, as neither trenched on health nor enjoyment, and the mental culture, without which the condition of the human being, even with lace and embroidery, is but little above that of the beast that perishes. You blame the Quaker ladies for not buying lace and embroidery; do you know any thing of the state of the poor women engaged in that manufacture, or in what you term fancy articles,—married as well as single women?"

"Not much; only I know they work amazingly cheaply: so cheaply, that if I were as rich as Mrs Greene, I would always buy, never make. That *thing*, as like an ungallant gentleman, you term my beautiful *canezou*, has cost me six weeks' labour; and I could buy it in a cheap shop in the city for £1, 2s."

"And certainly not the half of that sum went to the poor creature, who sat bundled up fourteen or sixteen hours a-day, poking her eyes out working it, earning from 6d. to 8d. daily. Have you ever had an opportunity of visiting the cottages or town-dwellings of the lace-workers in Buckinghamshire, Nottinghamshire, or Northampton county?—always abodes of discomfort and penury, often of actual starvation—where the natural order of things is very frequently inverted, the husband arranging the house, that the hands of the sickly, slatternly wife, may not be rendered unfit for the delicate employment on which her children's bread depends.

The free maids that weave their lace with bones,

are among the most miserable of the slaves of civilisation;—and its chains press upon and gall us every one, the rich as well as the poor. But let me not say civilisation—it is fashion, vanity, madness, I really mean. Society cannot be too highly civilized. I would see it rise to far higher enjoyments among its Marias, than this everlasting *ornamenting*, and needle and scissor work."

My young friend took up a book, with an arch glance at me. "This is a favourite writer with you, sir. What says he—'I love ornament: all nature is full of it.'"

"And so do I, love the ornament with which all nature is full: its colours, odours, forms; all its exquisite beauty, intricate or palpable, universal or minute—cannot be enough admired and glorified. Flowers, 'the stars of earth;' stars, 'the poetry of heaven;' these are the ornaments I love—and for this, among a million reasons, that their beauty is immutable, unchanging. The rose has been the '*red red rose*,' with the same rich foliage, since it first blossomed in Eden. The pale lily has risen on the self-same graceful stem since the general Mother 'fairest of her daughters,' first bent her dewy eyes upon that flower of Paradise. So when you quote Leigh Hunt against me, Maria, in favour of changeful fashions, as well as profuse ornament, you must quote in the spirit. If the rose chose to prank herself every season in new garniture, and sported yellow flowers with blue leaves, this year, and brown with white the next, I should tire even of her; if the lily forsook her slender stem and changed her pearly white tint—her Naïad-like beauty —to flaunt in crimson, with glossy leaves, I would be for instantly deposing her as the Queen of Flowers:—yea, if Jupiter himself—

The star of Jove, so beautiful and large,

chose to astonish the nations by rising tonight, angular in shape, with a deep, sapphire radiance, and to-morrow in flame-coloured taffeta, I would vote him a huge bore—and any thing but an *ornament* to the heavens.

The analogy between the ornament of which all nature is full, and the perpetually-changing, gaudy, inappropriate artificial ornaments of vanity and fashion, does not in the least hold, or rather it makes for me."

"Then you would not discard all beautiful, all magnificent things,—nor even our pretty decorations?"

"Certainly I would not,—only ugly trumpery, useless trash, to which you make yourselves slaves."

"Lace, for example, that exquisite fabric which Rousseau admired so much?"

"The *Man of Nature* was in many things a very sophisticated, artificial personage, Maria,—almost a coxcomb. I have no objection to your lace, and delicate needlework; though, in my Arcadia—my ideal republic—the beauty, health, and spirits of one order of the women shall never be sacrificed, that another may wear a thing about her face which Rachel Greene looks very pretty without, and Maria Roberts also."

"A compliment by implication! I shall value it were it but for the rarity," said my laughing companion. "Well, though our caps and veils cost something, pink bows and *brides* included, the Quaker ladies don't dress,—*clothe* themselves,—I beg pardon—for nothing. In the quality and fineness of the material, they are perfect *exquisites*."

"A consequence of really enlightened economy. Mrs Greene seriously asked me one day if I could, in this part of London, recommend her to a *dear* shop. Persons with whom a fashion lasts till a garment wears out, show good sense in making it of such materials as are worth bestowing labour upon. But let us reckon now, Maria, the real difference of money-cost between your lace English cap, and Rachel's snug Quaker one; or, say, between it and the tasteful veil of thin muslin, the becoming head-dress of a Genoese girl."

"I presume the Genoese head-gear like the Quakers—(like, and yet how unlike!)—may cost 2s. or 3s.; mine, my own labour, *brides* and bows included, at least 25s.; so there is a clear 21s. or more for Rachel Greene to hoard, which I distribute in encouraging manufactures, you perceive, sir."

"To spend on her *Infant School*, as like, Maria; or very probably in fuel or flannel petticoats for the poor creatures who have become sickly, and prematurely old, spending their life in fabricating ornaments for more fortunate women."

Maria sighed at this view of the question. "I do envy the rich, and the *Friends*, their means of benevolence."

"Don't be content with envying—*attain*; go to the fountain-head. The means of enlightened benevolence are in every one's power. Begin with my amiable young friend, Maria Roberts; emancipate her, in the first place, from her profitless, thankless toils, and this will be one great good gained."

"If the *world* would only come to your way of thinking, Mr Richard:—the first edict, I assure you of your King, *Ladies*, and Commons, which commands more rational conduct——"

"Unfortunately edicts won't do it." There was consequently no more to be said. What Maria called the *world* was still too strong for her. She was more and more its reluctant and repining slave; but not the less fettered that her very restiveness made the chain gall and fester.

Before I saw Mrs Roberts again, she had suffered from a severe rheumatic fever, produced by the cold sifting airs of her attic chamber; and by imagining that it was absolutely necessary to have furs to wear abroad, while flannel and fleecy hosiery might be dispensed with, not being *visible*, which, by the by, seems the practical belief of two-thirds of the female world, where both cannot be obtained.

Towards the end of the year tradesmen's bills, of all sorts and sizes, came tumbling in. Every new bill was a fresh surprise; yet their items were like housemaids' newspaper characters, *undeniable*. Maria studied, and summed and filed, but could not cipher away the startling amount; and now mistaking the reverse of wrong for right, as far astray as ever, and more offensively so, the small coal was meted out by scuttlefuls, the salt by cupfuls,—she counted the candle ends, and reckoned the potatoes. The small joint was charred for want of fire and Epping moisture, the pie-crust smelt of rancid kitchen stuff. Roberts, in an angry fit, vowed that he would dine at an ordinary, and the maid mutinied. Another was procured—*cheap*,—an awkward country lass, who, hitherto accustomed to handle only wooden pails and buckets, broke all more brittle wares. Roberts was for the time appeased. Indeed, if he had not, he must have been a savage,—for poor Maria, almost killed with mental anxiety and efforts at management, gave birth to her first child; and, to save expense, dismissed her nurse so soon, and was taken so seriously ill in consequence, that my

sister instantly procured a country nurse for her infant, and another for herself, scolding the unhappy Roberts for his senselessness; and making such inroads on Maria's savings and plans of retrenchment and economy, as I fully believe retarded her recovery.

By the middle of February Maria was restored to health—pale and meagre enough, but quite well as she vowed; and she brought home her child, from affection and economy, to be what old Irish and Scotch nurses call brought up "by the pan and the spoon,"—and English ones, "by the hand."

The christening feast and annual Christmas holiday-dinner were to be consolidated this year in furtherance of economy and retrenchment. Maria had given up her needle. She was now an active housewife. Long were the consultations we held. "I will show you a different bill from last year's," said she to me with harmless exultation in her newly-acquired knowledge,—"You shall see how I will *manage!*"

I had no wish to damp Maria's ardour, nor yet to check the current of her self-teaching. *Painful* experience I foresaw it was to turn out, but not the less wholesome in its effects. Her first dinner had been the *senselessly-ostentatious*;—her second was to be the most absurd of all, the worst of mistakes, the *Shabby-genteel*. I reserve its mortifying details and consequences for another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE SHABBY-GENTEEL.

At the top a fried liver and bacon were seen;
At the bottom was tripe, in a swinging tureen;
At the sides there were spinach and pudding made hot;
In the middle a place where the pasty—was not.
GOLDSMITH.

How often soever it may have been said, that we never seem ridiculous from what we are, but from what we assume to be, the saying remains as true as ever; and, therefore, I once more repeat it, at the opening of this chapter. Taken in this sense, ridicule is indeed the test of truth, for nothing *true* can be in itself ridiculous. We may smile in contempt or derision of conceit and folly; or laugh in sympathy with comic or ludicrous scenes and ideas; but it is pretension, assumption only, that move our ridicule. To be above its insolent insulting inflictions we have only to be ourselves; which simple part, to the bulk of mankind, appears the most difficult to perform of any. Our social customs universally conspire to make us attempt every thing, rather than display the real character; but above all to conceal the true circumstances in which we live. We must either seem above, or—though far more rarely—below them. The very wealthy do sometimes take to

The Devil's own vice,
The pride that apes humility,

as soon as they rise above the more common affectations of vanity.

My young friend, Mrs Roberts, exposed herself to *ridicule*, by the common folly of assuming to give dinners, to dress, and to live in the style of persons of double her income; but, for the credit of English morality, I regret to say, that she only incurred the penalty by attempting to reconcile discretion and honesty with what, in such circumstances, was quite incompatible. Extravagance, folly, debt, gross dishonesty, might, in short, have been pardoned, where the thing was managed with *dash*, and a proper understanding of effect; but who can pardon the *Shabby-genteel*,—abhorred of gods, men, and charwomen.—And on a charwoman turned the fortunes of Maria Roberts' *Second Christmas Dinner*.

I mentioned in the last chapter that she had, from frugality, hired one of those wondrous machines, a *maid-of-all-work*, ignorant and stupid, at half wages,—who made up the balance by breaking china and glass, and damaging every article of furniture that fell in her way. I have frequently noticed that notable housekeeping ladies are, in general, fatalists about breaking Mrs Roberts, after the first three months, concluded that Jane had got through most of her breakings.——"And she was so good-hearted and kind to 'baby,'—that important small personage in so many small households,—and was believed so honest." "With myself, Jane, and the charwoman, and a good deal of forethought, I can manage very well," said Maria, at one of our final consultations. "I shall have every thing possible done beforehand,—the cooking will be all over before the company begin to arrive,—then I can dress in a minute; and Biddy, [the Irish charwoman,] when she has sent in dinner, can assist Jane to wait at table. I cannot think of having one of those insolent fellows of hired footmen in the house again; and those cooks who go about, are so horridly extravagant, conceited, and dictating,—one of them, whom Mrs Pantague hires to assist her cook, charges 15s. a-day; and must be *wine'd* and *portered*, and waited upon and coaxed."

I entirely approved of dispensing with the

perambulating footman, whether "of parts or figure," and also the consequential cook mentioned, whom I knew to be as troublesome and conceited as if she had taken a regular diploma from M. Ude; but how Jane and Biddy were to perform their various functions was still an affair through which I could not see my way. Of the latter I had indeed considerable suspicion all along; strenuously as I understood she had been recommended by her countrywoman, my neighbour, the orange-seller, Mrs Plunkett, as possessing every good quality requisite under a kitchen roof,—"had lived cook in genteel families, both in Bath and Dublin city itself; and in her first husband's time, assisted the cook to the mess of the 92d regiment, though that was fifteen years ago."

My doubts threw Maria into fresh perplexity: she studied her bill of fare. "It would be taking too great a liberty to ask Mrs James Taylor to lend me her cook for a day; but I might ask her advice — she is always so gentle, and so kind to me."

"But you won't ask her advice though," I put in abruptly. "My sister Anne is one of the best women that breathes; no one more amiable — more generous; but, good worthy lady, she has been happy and moderate enough never to have known any one serious domestic difficulty in her life. She has always been so perfectly at ease in money matters herself, that, like many more excellent women one meets, she is rather puzzled to find out why other people are not as much at *their* ease, and have not every thing as *nice* and proper about their nurseries and their table as herself. When Roberts can allow you £600 or £800 a-year for your housekeeping, about half my brother's liberal allowance, then advise with my sister Anne. She can discourse most sensibly on economy, and wonder, too, how people need be so very ill off. In which sort of surprise, I have seen her sensible husband join her, and with a most proper and husband-like admiration of his wife's domestic talents, declare that where families do not go on well, (with probably not the fourth of her means,) there must be bad management at bottom. And yet they are among the best people I know. To comprehend the exigencies of your position in society, or rather that of struggling professional people — the most difficult of any — is quite out of their way. Your part in life, once clearly ascertained, ought to be easily filled."

"I assure you, to me it seems the most difficult of any. If with the fourth part of Mrs James Taylor's income, one could do with the fourth of the beef, bread, tea, coals, candles, butter, and so forth; — but you see how it is — that would be no rule, — and what to save upon, while one must have every thing the self-same as those wealthy people —"

"Or at least some *mock imitation*, and *make-shift* thing, Maria. Well, it is a wretched system, a despicable slavery — this making one guinea do the fashionable work of three, or *seem to do*; for, after all, it never gets beyond seeming. Like the foolish bird, we hide our heads under the wing of our own vanity, and fancy that the whole world is not seeing and laughing at us, because we have hoodwinked ourselves."

I had probably pushed the conversation beyond the point of politeness; for on this subject, and with so interesting a victim before me, I could have no reserve or patience. Sometimes my heart misgave me, and I was on the point of warning Maria against the absurdities she was about to commit, and the ridicule she was to draw upon herself, by her "Three Courses and a Dessert;" but stern friendship counselled that I should let her do her worst, and endure the penalty of shame and mortification at once and for ever.

I undertook several little commissions for Maria, connected with her *fête*, and promised to come myself very early, to amuse Mr Sam. Madox, a cockney bachelor of some sixty years; somewhat of a virtuoso, but more of a *gourmand*, finical and withal priggish, and known by the ladies of the many families with whom he managed to be a dinner-visiter, as "that plague, old Madox, who always comes so early." Not that he came a second before the appointed hour, but to that he appeared punctual as the hand of his watch.

I did not appear before my services were required. Great as are the mysterious powers of ubiquity possessed by a maid-of-all-work, it is still just possible that the most thorough-bred of the corps cannot overtake every thing. When I arrived, all was, as is said, at sixes and sevens. The parlour fire was still unlit; the confusion in the kitchen might have been, as the charwoman who made it said, "stirred with a stick." Maria, in a morning gown and apron, not over clean, of course, and her brown tresses in papillotes, was hushing "baby,"— who squalled, as if on purpose, ten times louder than ever he had squalled before,— and casting looks of distraction and despair on Biddy, the regular charwoman and brevet

cook. To me the latter was the most amusing person of the group. Maria watched her as a clever sensible patient may an ignorant surgeon, certain that all was going wrong, that some dreadful mischief was impending, but overawed by the dignity of the profession, and afraid to interfere. Mrs Roberts was conscious that, though perfectly able to judge of results, she still knew little or nothing of preliminary culinary processes; and was, in many cases, an entire stranger to the mode by which particular effects were to be produced. It was not difficult to perceive that Biddy, if she had ever possessed the requisite skill, had let her right hand forget its cunning. Like all other persons in office who do not know their own business, she required a deputy.

"Sorrow be on you, girl, won't you give me the cullender; and the tureen, as you see, between my own hands." Mrs Roberts flew with the desired utensil. "Och, excuse me—is it yourself, ma'am—where the *diaoul* has that creature Jane put the dish-cloth, which was in my own hands this minute.—In troth, then, sir," continued she, looking at me with one of her broadest grins, "if you don't lave that, we'll be thinking of pinning it to your tails. But just mention, mi-lady, now, what sa*w*ce you would like for the roast bullock's heart, that's to relave the soused rabbits and onion sa*w*ce."

"Oh, not the rabbits," cried Maria: "surely you know better—you can't forget it is the *Hessian ragout*, that the mock roast-hare relieves—"

"Well, never mind—the one or the other it is, any way. Sure, I saw it oftener than there's teeth in my jaws, both ways. With the mess of the 92d it was always the t'other way; but your ladyship may take your own way for all that."

"Think how time flies, my good woman," cried the anxious hostess—"almost five! Will you take another draught of beer—and then the pheasant—not singed yet. ——Mrs James Taylor has sent me such a beautiful pheasant!"——

"We'll be none the worse of the liquor, any way, ma'am. And is not he an illigant love of a bird, now, Mr Richard,—many is the likes of him I seen in my own country—only a thought larger.—(*Drinks*)—That's no bad beer. Cox's house is one of the best in Lunnon, both for measure and quality. But would you like his head twisted this way, ma'am, or that way, ma'am? He is a prince of a bird! He'll grace vour table, ma'am!"

"So I hope. It was so good of Mrs Taylor to send me this game—I never would have gone to this bird's price. But dear me, cook, truss the head any way:—really, my good woman, this is no time for conversation—pleasantly as you talk—any way with his head—you know best about that."

"*I shud*," was pronounced with emphatic brevity; and the neck of the unhappy biped was twisted every way but that which fashion or custom prescribes and calls the right way. Maria guessed as much; and I admired the strong good sense and presence of mind which prevented her from fretting, or standing on trifles in such an emergency. She was like Napoleon giving his commands to the surgeon accoucheur of Marie Louise. Mrs Roberts' silence seemed to say, "Treat my golden pheasant as if it were but an ordinary barn-door fowl."

"And never fear," replied Biddy, "I'll have him in in pudding-time, I warrant me,—the pisant and the sowles, ma'am, first—An't that it?"

"O dear, no, no," cried Maria, now thoroughly vexed. "The pheasant—the game, is for the third course."

"The third coorse!—Sure I have seen him in the first, when a donny bird like that, both in mi-lady Cark's, and Mr Sergeant Saurin's too."

"But in England—O Biddy!—Well, you Jane, *you* will surely remember when the pheasant is to be sent in. Here's the bill of fare."

Again, perverse "baby" squalled out, and drowned all our voices.

"Such a scene, Mr Richard—will you, pray, step into the parlour,—Jane has lit the fire now again, I hope. O, baby, cruel baby! if you knew what your poor mother has to undergo to-day, you would surely be a better boy. Gracious! that's old Madox's knock!"

This luckily proved a false alarm; "baby," by good fortune, had now exhausted himself in squalling, and fell asleep. Maria had five minutes to dress; but how, she whispered, could she leave that fearful Biddy.

"Make yourself asy, ma'am: trust to myself, and mind you your good company. First, the *sowles*, and the *Hissian ragout*:—but there's no good any way of letting this drop of beer die a natral death in the mug. A merry meeting of friends to you, mi-lady! and trust your dinner to myself, and I'll do it handsome and gentale, as Mr Richard there will tell you."

The maid, by power of bellows, had by this time forced a tardy reluctant fire in the parlour, and sent clouds of ashes over all the neatly laid-out table, the labours of the indefatigable Maria. Willing to be useful, aware that the mode of a service may often double its value, and having no fitter means, I dusted all round and over with my veritably *clean* silk handkerchief—and sagaciously comprehending that a bundle of half or one-third-burnt wax-lights, such as thrifty housewives buy cheap in London, were meant to be stuck in the candlesticks, but forgotten by her of all-work, I also performed this other duty. And now Madox fairly knocked, and Maria flew down, adorned, from her attic chamber. Miss Kelly never shifted her costume more rapidly. We were both in the passage on our way to the drawing-room; but the final orders were to be given to panting Jane, who was about half-dressed. "Now, for any sake, Jane, don't forget what I have driven into you! Don't affront me by your stupidity:—the thickened butter—and to have the coffee hot—and to heat the cream—and the drawing-room fire; and oh, do try to keep 'baby' quiet, if he awake; and don't let him pull his nice cap. But don't put it on till I ring for him—and above all, be sure you don't let Biddy roar so loud, or touch more beer—you know what a beast she makes of herself—she will spoil the dinner, and break the things. O! that plague, old Madox! How he does knock!"

"Yes mar'am—no mar'am," followed at intervals from the bewildered maid of all-work, whose replies were mechanically measured by time; certainly not dictated by sense—for true it was, as Maria said.

"Now, Jane, you don't know a word I have been saying to you. Oh me!"

Maria had not composed her looks, or drawn on her gloves, when Mr Madox was upon us in the blue drawing-room.

Whether the devil tempted him or not, I cannot tell, but he talked away at no allowance of the excellence of the London markets always at this holiday-time. Fish so good—salmon, prime—game—wild ducks—teal. It was the very season for the London carnival.

Mrs Pantague here sailed in imperially—spread abroad in brocade, capped and jewelled; and after the ordinary compliments, the discourse flowed in the former channel. She had been ordering things that morning, though she rarely marketed herself. Mrs Pantague was one of those many English people, who use the possessive pronoun on all possible occasions. "*My* fishmonger." "*My* confectioner." One might have thought she held the whole of each poor man in sole property. *My* cook is nothing.

"My cook is so exquisite a judge, that I rarely look at any thing. I can so fully rely upon *my* butcher. How do you manage, my dear Mrs Roberts?"

"The London markets are splendidly filled at present, ma'am," said Plague Madox to the great lady. "Few London sights equal to them after all, ma'am."

"And so they are, Mr Madox:—Paris, Brussels.—I don't say much about Vienna, though my friend, Lady Danvers, who lived long there, when his Lordship was connected with the embassy, has often told me that Vienna is in *bonne chere* a superb city; but after all, Mr Madox, as you say, commend me to the London markets. Cookery may be better understood in Paris.—You have been in Paris, I conclude, Mr Madox,—often?"—Madox bowed.—"But for provisions; the sterling English staple, as Sir John says, London may challenge the world,—fish, flesh, or fowl."

"Right, madam, and so it may. Old English roast beef, the growth of every county. Banstead mutton, Essex veal, Dorking fowls, Norfolk turkeys, Lincolnshire geese.—Hey, Mr Roberts, got before you." Maria bit her lips over the alimentary catalogue of the mouth, while Roberts saluted the company.

I cannot go into the mortifying details of this *Three Courses, and a Dessert.* The bawling, and mishaps of Biddy, the blunders of distracted Jane, the agony of poor Mrs Roberts, and the distant squalling of "baby." Even *I* could not have anticipated a chain of such mortifying accidents, though they were all quite natural.

The awkwardness of the guests who possessed politeness and delicacy, and the ill-suppressed grumbling of the ruder natures, disappointed in that great affair, a dinner, was nothing to the airs of insolent disgust, with which Mrs Pantague pushed away plate after plate—touched, yet untouched. I must acknowledge that the *soles* were not of the freshest, though they might be correspondingly *cheap*,—nor were they the best cooked. Mrs Pantague, in pure malice, I am certain, required to have the dish named *Hessian ragout*, analyzed by Madox.

"Bullocks' cheek stew! that is a ragout I am not acquainted with;—not any, thank you: indeed I have dined." The great lady

leant back in her chair with a look of haughty yet piteous resignation to her fate.

"There's a pheasant coming," faltered poor Mrs Roberts. It was in her dinner like the single great lord among a vain man's acquaintance.

"I will trouble you, Mrs Roberts," said my hearty brother James, "I did not know the dish under its fine name. You remember, Dick, how we used to lay our ears in this stew at Nurse Wilks's on Sundays. Never was turtle so glorious."

This was scarcely a rally for Maria. At another time it would have been mortification. Plague Madox now ventured upon "Just one-half spoonful of the ragout,—thick;" and, after cautiously reconnoitering the table, had the dose repeated. This looked better; and

By and by, the second course
Came lagging like a distanced horse.

Bullocks' heart stuffed and roasted has its admirers even among *gourmands:* but then it must be *roasted*, sanguinary as English eaters are. The condition was, therefore, a capital disappointment to more than one gentleman, and worse to Mrs Roberts, compelled to say, "Take this away," though it had been her main reliance; a dish that both Mr James Taylor and Mr Madox particularly admired—and rarely saw. A young puppy, one of Mr Roberts' friends, who had got, by chance or accident, a copy of verses into a magazine, and set up literary pretensions accordingly, regaled us at our side of the table with the story of "De Coucy's Heart," and the "Basil Pot," till the ladies began to look pale and sick. Across the table there was a dialogue on cannibalism and the New Zealanders, which, so far as it was heard, did not mend our health nor quicken our appetites; but all this was nothing to the tremendous crash which came at once above, below, and around us!—and the exclamation,

"Och diaoul! come quick, jewel, Mr Richard. Did not the kitchen chimney go on fire—we are all in a blaze!" And Biddy, like ten furies, was in the midst of us.

The ladies huddled together and screamed, and would have run into the street—if not prevented by main force, backed by my speedy assurance that this was a false alarm—merely a blaze of overturned grease as their noses might inform them. Maria, forgetting every thing but a mother's feelings, flew to find her child, who appeared among us after all in his night-cap, but yet helped wonderfully to restore tranquillity, as all the women were bound in turns to seize, and kiss him. Things looked better again. The *sweets*, previously prepared by poor Maria with great pains and care, and want of sleep, and a wonderful effort for a first, got the length of being "damned with faint praise" by the lady-judges, though Mrs Pantague did recommend Mrs Roberts to try "My confectioner only for once. He was, to be sure, an unconscionable wretch in his prices—but exquisite in taste. His *Vanilla Cream* was allowed to be unequalled in London. It was sent to the Pavilion, and to Devonshire House, when nothing else of his was taken. It was indeed a great favour to procure it." What was the final catastrophe of the pheasant I cannot to this day tell, but he never appeared; and Plague Madox indemnified himself with *blue* stilton and some tolerable Edinburgh Ale. The Port,—it was called clarety-port—something that was to unite *cheaply the body* of Portugal with the *spirit* of France,—he had sipped—eyed between him and the candle—and pulled in on trial another decanter. I suppose the Sherry, or rather Cape Madeira, he hit upon, was a leap out of the frying-pan into the fire. He actually made faces.

"Who is your wine-merchant, Roberts?" cried loud Mr Pantague, the stock-broker, from where he sat by the elbow of the miserable hostess, who had now lost self-possession and almost temper, and who afterwards told me that it was with great difficulty she kept from crying. Pantague was also smacking critically, and holding his glass between him and the candle. Roberts looked as simple as his wife, and more vexed. Either no current name of value in the wine-trade occurred to him, or he might not like to lie. He had, after a moment's pause, the forethought, the true John-Bull spirit and manliness to say, "The very little wine I use, Mr Pantague, I buy where I find it best and *cheapest*."

"O right—quite right," cried Mr Pantague, and he tossed off his glass. This was the most hopeful feature of the night. Could I have caught the eyes of the speaker mine would have thanked him.

"Very fair port, this," said Mr James Taylor, the rich thriving solicitor. Plague Madox drew his red wine glass to him again, and filled it once more. "New; but very good: what say you, Dick?—My brother is one of the best judges of wines now in London. You need not gainsay it now, Dick: your Italian residence, and your early pursuits,

have made you so; but I believe you refer it to your unsophisticated palate."

I rose one hundred per cent with the company in one second; and resolved to improve my sudden accession of vinous fame to the benefit of Maria Roberts.

"There ought to be *wine* in this house; ladies' wine, at least," I said, nodding, knowingly, to Mrs Roberts. "If the lady of it would only appoint me her butler for the night, I think I could find it."

"With the utmost pleasure, Mr Richard; but you know ——"

"What I know,—give me your key." Maria stared at me. There was method in my madness. I returned in five minutes, or rather more, and solemnly placed a couple of pint bottles upon the table. Jane furnished me with fresh glasses.

"I am not going to accuse our hostess of not bestowing the very best wine she has upon her friends; but I am afraid I must accuse her of not having taste enough in wine to know the value of her own treasures."

"Nay, if I had thought that half as admired as ——"

"Give me leave, ma'am. We need not mystify the matter. This is two of six bottles,—but we must not rob Mrs Roberts of more than one, this little cobwebbed fellow,—that came as a present from the Bishop of ——'s cellars; sent by his lady to her goddaughter, our amiable hostess, before her late confinement. The late brother of the Bishop was for some time Governor at the Cape. Give me your opinion, ladies, of this *coddling* wine, that you send in presents to favourites." I had said enough for a lady of such quick tact as Mrs Pantague.

"Delicious Constantia!" was her affectedly rapturous exclamation. "'Tis not every where one meets with the like of this. And the Bishop's Lady, whom I have seen at Brighton, is your godmother, Mrs Roberts?"

"I have that honour."

"Exquisite wine! The veritable nectar of the gods, Mr Richard, must be Constantia. Nay, nay; this must be kept for a *bonne bouche*,—husbanded,—a fourth of a glass, if you please." I had no wish to hazard a second trial, having come off so well upon the first.

"The *bouquet*,—the delicious fragrance of this wine, is its charm to me," said our young poet. "You must be sensible of it, Mr Richard?"

"I'll be hanged if I smell any thing save the burning grease the cook had nearly set the chimney on fire with," replied my brother. "She seems, by the way, on very happy terms of familiarity with you, Dick; and quite a character in your way. I believe you know all the Irish charwomen in London."

All the ladies tasted the "delicious Constantia," while Maria, trying to look frowningly, really looked half-comic, half-amused, at my impudent fraud. Several of the fair judges pronounced it very fine. My sister, Anne, said it was very sweet and *nice* indeed,—but of wine she was no judge; and Miss Claves, a very lively young lady, vowed it was so like Milk Punch, which was quite a charming thing, that she could not tell the difference for her life.

"Oh, the *green* taste of *raw* girls, Mr Richard!" whispered Mrs Pantague. "How many good things in life are thrown away upon them! Your niece, Charlotte, has really then positively refused the old banker—her ultimatum given?—But will Mrs Roberts never move, think you? Really, to be frank, I long for a cup of even cold wishwashy coffee after this (*a shrug*) absurd *visceral* repast. I wish some friend would give the poor young woman a hint!—Could not you, Mr Richard?" She looked at her watch.

I vowed in my indignant heart that Maria should, in hearing every word of this, reap the bitter fruit of her own vain toils. But I did not need to be so severe in my lesson.

Before the poet and myself reached the drawing-room, half the ladies had disappeared. From below Plague Madox, my brother, and all the old stagers went off without looking near us. The clarety-port could not have been very good, after all, I suspect. Madox swore that either the wine or the fare had deranged him sadly; for three days fairly baffled Dr Kitchener's *Peptic Precepts*,—lost him two *good* dinner parties,—and raised doubts whether he would ever accept an invitation from Roberts, or any man who kept no regular cook, in his life again, where every thing was, he said, "more provoking and worse than another. Pity the poor fellow with such a wife!"

In the mean time I have forgotten to tell, that, when very late, George Roberts, and a few young men, who, in spite of every disaster, stood by him and the bottle, staggered up stairs. I was now alone in the drawing-room. The young ladies, after yawning, hour after hour, in the vain hope of relief from below; after examining and re-examin-

ing Maria's store of nick-nacks, and hopelessly endeavouring to extract music and young gentlemen from the broken-stringed cabinet piano-forte, had all taken wing while Maria was gone to put "baby" to sleep.

Roberts was half tipsy, half chagrined, and I perceived in a fair way of getting into very bad temper. This was his day of festival, the christening *fête* of his first-born; and there was no joy, no sociality, no pleasure, no amusement. He had promised his young friends, his wife's music, female society, a dance, — and there remained for them an empty disordered room, where "Queer Mr Richard Taylor" kept watch over four blinking wax-candle ends and a few smouldering cinders.

"Where are all the ladies — where is Maria?" was said hurriedly. "Where is Mrs Roberts?" in a more imperative, and husband-like tone. Echo might answer *where*, if she chose, but I was dumb. Roberts jerked the blue bell rope; and down it came, and up came panting Jane.

"Where is your mistress?"

"Putting 'baby' to sleep, Sir."

It would be treason against nature to suppose that Roberts could really have said "Deuce take 'baby;'" but Jane, who looked perfectly aghast, and, indeed, in utter horror, certainly believed those shocking, unnatural words were spoken; and had they even been, they would have meant nothing serious — a proof that a man must not always be judged by his rash expressions.

"By Jove!" was the next exclamation, "if we cannot have amusement above stairs, we shall have jollity below. Here you, Biddy, or whatever they call you ——"

"Biddy Duigenan, an' plase your honour — so christened by Father ——"

"Get us a dry devil, or a broiled bone, or something peppery and famous."

"Och then! devil a bone with a thread on it, within the dour of ye. The mistress chooses her mate without bones. She's a mighty frugal, managing young cratur."

This conversation passed aloud, between the door of the drawing-room and the bottom of the stairs. The young men roared in full chorus; and Mr Sullivan the Templar, instantly challenged a countrywoman in Biddy, who was heard laughing jollily below, crying to Jane, "Faix, but it does myself good to see the gentlemen getting hearty and merry at last. One might thought their faste a *Keanin*, — no luck till the bits of misses, the craturs, go off."

"By the Powers! if we can't get meat we shall have drink, boys," cried Mr George Roberts again, in a most uproarious and savage humour, something affected too by the satirical commentary made by one of his friends on "a lady choosing her *mate* without bones," which as a husband of some eighteen months, and consequently still very touchy on the score of *hen-pecking*, he fancied it mightily concerned his honour and masterhood to resent.

"Ay, *bones* and blood, and spirit too, by Jove. Maria! Mrs Roberts! Madam, I say, come down stairs! You shall see, gentlemen, who is master in this house — if all the wives in Christendom"—But it is idle to repeat the ravings of an intoxicated man. I knew Maria would have the delicacy and sense not to come down stairs; and Sullivan, by far the soberest of the party, having brought our host to order, and promised to me to take care of the party, I stole away. Jane, as I afterwards learned, a simple country girl, immediately became so frightened, that she crept up to her mistress, reporting "that the gentlemen were tipsy and riotous, and that one of them had pulled her on the stairs. Master was tramping up and down, rummaging all the cupboards for brandy to make punch; and Biddy was worse than all the rest." Maria, a stranger to every species of excess, a girl transferred from school to her own house, became more nervous than Jane; and as the noise of song and revelry,

Of tipsy dance and jollity,

rose louder and louder from the polluted blue-room, constituted into a kind of *Free-and-Easy* club-room, the women bolted themselves in. Jane, after her hard day's work, soon fell asleep, sitting on the floor; and it was not till the watchmen, attracted by the riot within, had rung repeatedly, and that the young men sallied out "to thrash the Charleys," when a general *melé* ensued, that she was awoke by the shaking and suppressed cries of her mistress, as the whole party below, Biddy Duigenan included, were carried off by the guardians of the night, and safely lodged! How Maria got through the dreadful night, I cannot tell; but I lost no time, after receiving her early message, in repairing to the Office. Mr Roberts and his friends were already liberated without examination, and had slunk away, bribing Biddy to silence with sundry shillings and half-crowns.

Roberts looked foolish enough when I found him at home, sitting amid the wrecks

of the blue-room, writing a note of apology to Joseph Greene for the nocturnal disturbance; but he still seemed to believe that the whole mischief arose from Maria's absurd management, and that air of pretension, which, together with the *shabby gentility* of her entertainment, had made them both ridiculous. To the same cause he imputed the discomfort and mal-arrangement of every thing, — nay, even what he termed the impudence of that Irish hag, and the insolence of that stock-broker's dame. He did, however, condescend to apologize to his wife for the outrage of which he had subsequently been guilty; and his boon companions of the night, one and all, afterwards declared, that they durst never look Mrs Roberts in the face again.

This was not the end of the affair. Roberts was forgiven by his wife, who, in her ignorance of *life*, fancied his conduct far more grievous and degrading than he was disposed to own it. But there was another reckoning to adjust. By some means my brother got intelligence of the manner in which Roberts' *fête* had ended. "A married man, — in his own house, — it is too bad. I fear this is not the first of it," James said to me. "For some weeks, Richard, I have wished to consult you about this. Do you know, Roberts is short of his cash?"

Awful charge against a confidential clerk! I guessed how much it imported.

"To what extent?"

"No great extent; but the thing is so wrong, so *unbusiness-like*." This is another most significant phrase. "About £60 or £70 — and perhaps he may have some claim against me; but I don't like the look of it. Such arrears are so *unbusiness-like*. I fear he is extravagant — getting dissipated ——"

"Only foolish—or something of that sort," was my careless reply;—"but he will mend, I dare say. What, meanwhile, have you done?"

"Ordered him to balance his cash, and pay up by Friday at farthest."

"Quite right."

I instantly took my way to the Row. Maria was in the blue drawing-room; now in its gilding and draperies of all hues, soiled and tawdry; the ornaments smoked and tarnished; the chairs and tables crazy or fractured, and the purple and gold purse sadly faded from its original splendour, as I remarked on seeing it on the table.

"Alas! it has acquired a worse fault," Maria said, while she shook it to display its emptiness, smiling and sighing.

"A sieve-like quality — the faculty of running out faster than Roberts pours in —"

"Something very like that, I confess."

"Do you pardon my frankness, Mrs Roberts, and give me leave to be sincere with you?"

"I do, I do, and thank you most sincerely. With our limited income" —— (*hesitation.*)

"All your stitching and pulling cannot keep fortune in at heels, and make both ends meet."

"You have guessed it, Mr Richard. Were it not for my poor child,—and poor Roberts, too, I would certainly endeavour to procure a situation as a governess,—and Roberts, he might go into lodgings again, since it seems I cannot, with all my skill and economy, manage that we should live within our income, — and it is worse than that with us! Oh, I assure you, it has almost broken my heart! Mr Roberts is short of Mr Taylor's cash. It is shocking! — his probity may be doubted; and he is in fearful temper this morning. I dread his coming back." Maria could no longer restrain her tears. I was gratified by her confidence in me, pleased that Roberts had at once told her the circumstance so important to them both; but she had another motive for confiding in me. "I have a great favour to beg of you: I have a few trinkets," she said; "presents and gifts of one kind or another. It would be such a kindness in you to dispose of them for me, that I may help Roberts so far. There is the piano, too, and other *useless* things" —— she looked round the room — "they would not bring much, but every thing helps."

I knew, for I had seen it, that Maria had at least the full value for her *suit* of pearls and other ornaments; but principle and generous affection were far more powerful than vanity. Roberts had peremptorily refused to dispose of her trinkets; he was even affronted by the proposal, and she depended on me, and urged me; and with the case in my pocket I left her, and encountered her husband at the corner of the street.

"You have been calling for your favourite, Mrs Greene?" said Roberts.

"No; I have spent the last hour with my more interesting favourite, Mrs Roberts."

Mr Roberts looked confused and uneasy. He remembered in what humour he had left his wife in the morning. "Then, sir, you have spent your time with a very silly, in-

corrigible woman: but this, I suppose, is no news to you; you see how all reason and advice are thrown away upon her."

These were high airs, indeed, for Mr George to give himself! he who deserved at least a full half share of the common blame.

"Pardon me if I see no such thing; but quite the reverse. To me, Mrs Roberts appears an uncommonly clever young woman, —generous, candid, and well-principled,— and most anxious to do her duty, so far as she understands it. All she requires is, forbearance, kindness, and gentle guidance, till her rapidly increasing knowledge is matured into experience."

The honeymoon was long past, and Roberts, as I have said, in the crisis when young husbands are the most susceptible of jealousy for their many privileges and powers; yet was Roberts much better pleased with my opinion of his wife, than if it had coincided with that which he had expressed. I took his arm, and we walked back towards his house. One of the peculiar blessings of an old bachelor and slender annuitant like myself, is the power of saying, when the salvation of a friend demands frankness, things that it would frighten a sensible man with a wife and six small children, to dream of uttering. Some of these startling things I now whispered in the ear of George Roberts and his wife. They were young, healthy, virtuous, sincerely attached to each other, better endowed with world's goods than on the average are four-fifths of their fellow-citizens—why should they not be happy? "How great a blessing were it," said George, sensibly, "if young women were trained to the *utilities*, and *comforts*, and *solidities*, like Rachel Greene, and less to the *refinements* of life, like Maria."

Now, though Maria was more my favourite at present, from compassionate interest, and though custom had stamped many of her little pretty ways and affectations with the name of refinement, was she in reality more truly refined, farther removed from the vulgarities and the assumptions of affectation, than Rachel Greene, the amiable Quakeress, with whom she was contrasted?

"If Maria had been taught a little plain housewifery, instead of so much music," continued sensible George, "how much better for us all now!"

Yet Maria had not been taught so *very* much music. She had not, at least, acquired more than any girl might easily learn between seven and seventeen, and practise while it was desirable, without interfering, in the least, with her domestic duties, where music is kept as an elegant recreation, not held as a means of coquetry and display.

"If we could be carded through each other," said Maria, half laughing.

"Ay, Rachel's substance, with Maria's gloss and colour, would be a first-rate fabric. I think I see it in my fancy-loom. I shall never despair of *woman* in the general, nor of Maria in particular."

I took my leave, inviting myself back to tea, at which time, in a regular family-council, I deposited the price of Maria's pearls in her husband's hands. He was half-offended, half-vexed. I have ever noted that men have much less true magnanimity and simple greatness, on such occasions, than women. He was at first ashamed and angry at being obliged to his own wife; but better feelings prevailed. We had a long, frank, and therefore a most satisfactory explanation. The *limited income* was the first head of discourse. I heard George expatiate on that with some impatience. "Your income is, at least, more, by three times, than the richest rector in England affords to his drudge curate,—twice or near three times more than the income of two-thirds of our half-pay officers, with considerable perquisites in addition."

"These have undone me," said Roberts. "Trusting to these, I forbore to be so explicit with my wife as I ought to have been. I trusted to contingencies. I did not choose to seem churlish and sordid, by perpetual interference with her arrangements, for I read all her anxiety to do right."

"Fluctuating income and sanguine calculation have ruined thousands," was my *sensible*, though rather commonplace rejoinder.

George Roberts needed not my directions, now that his good sense was roused. His wife's generous sacrifice, for so he was pleased to call it, though neither Maria nor myself would allow the phrase, and the sale of nearly all the moveables of the *blue room*, enabled him next day to clear scores with my kind brother, Mr James Taylor, who now said there was no such pressing haste, as Mr Roberts, *with his first year's outlay*, might need a little indulgence.

On the same day Maria could say she at last had a house of her own to *live in*, almost as comfortable as Rachel Greene's.

Jane and she had indeed worked hard to have all right before Roberts came home, to dine *in comfort*; bringing myself along with him, after the completion of our *blue* sale, to

share the very small but sufficient juicy stew of meat with vegetables and apple-pasty, which formed the dinner. After dinner, while she filled my tall Teniers-looking glass with amber-coloured creaming Scottish ale, Maria said, with a more elevated spirit than I had ever seen her assume,—with an air of noble simplicity, "Drink to the happy woman, my excellent friend, whose husband owes no man a shilling,—and to her who resolves that, so far as depends upon her economy and management, he never shall."

I never accepted pledge with more sincere pleasure in all my life.

"But what will Mrs Pantague say?" said Roberts, laughing.

"Exquisite Constantia!" mimicked Maria, archly, as she sipped the cream off her ale; and the merriest young natural laugh rang out that I had ever heard her indulge. My fears for the peace of the Roberts family—for their prosperity and happiness, were laid for ever. The spell of fashion was broken—the demon, Mrs Pantague, exorcised; and Maria was one more proof that a well-principled character, an intelligent and active mind, when its energy is roused, will be found in every circumstance equal to the common duties of life. She became an excellent housewife.

There were few of the many houses at which "I dropt in" where the fireside now looked so snug and sunny as that of Mrs Roberts. Even "baby," my old antipathy, now well managed and healthy, had grown a fat, good humoured, smiling, *conversable* fellow. Maria once again ventured to *take in* the newspapers at the usual expense, and never grudged to pay for as much reading as Roberts or myself chose to give her at what she called the mother's hours of work,—from seven to ten in the evening.

Towards the end of the year I was again consulted by my sagacious brother, James.

"What do you think, Dick; that old fox, Martin of Chancery Lane, is trying to steal George Roberts from me—the man who knows all my affairs better than myself—the boy I brought up, whom I trust as my right hand. Don't you think, Dick, I might do worse, now that I am growing lazy and fond of the farm, than give so steady a fellow as Roberts some sort of share?"

"There was an obstacle about his arrears," was my sly reply, "Was there not? He either overdrew, or was *behind in his cash*."

Mr James Taylor could remember nothing of it; and there was no affectation, much less insincerity, in his oblivion on those points,—which inclines me to think that when statesmen sometimes totally forget their early professions, they may not be so hypocritical as people imagine.

"Is there any thing you think Mrs Roberts would like at this Christmas season? You are a great friend of hers, I find,—and she has considerable influence with Roberts."

"My brother wished to show you some substantial mark of his good-will," said I to Maria, when two hours afterwards I went to her house. "I have counselled him to assist Roberts in purchasing the lease of the house next your friend Rachel Greene's new abode. He has money to lend at a very low rate of interest; and as you often truly tell me, rent is such an *eat*-em, (*item,*) as the Scots say, in a fixed income. On your own personal account, instead of *gaud* or *toy*, I accepted only of this."—And I called in the boy who bore the guitar I had chosen and purchased for her as my brother's gift. Maria was not too proud to feel warmly, to seem highly gratified; and in six weeks afterwards I partook of her THIRD CHRISTMAS DINNER, in her new house.

"I am afraid to venture," said she beforehand, "strong as is still the recollection of all my mortifications, and disgraces, and miserable failure of last year; but with the treasure you have given me in poor Sally Owen, who is the most neat, industrious, and excellent servant-of-all-work I have ever seen, I think I must venture, since Roberts insists we can now, by better economy and sense, afford to see our *real* friends, and a pleasant acquaintance too. But I grieve to tease Sally with a party, who still pines so about her little girl, and that *scamp* of a husband of hers."

"The sooner she is roused from these recollections the better."

I could think with no patience of Mr Hardy, the marvellous boot-closer, who, because he could earn very great wages, contented himself with half; wasted that pittance in riot; starved, *beat*, broke the heart of his uncomplaining wife; whom I could sometimes have beaten also in anger of her foolish forbearance, and really tender but senseless attachment to this worthless fellow, who had, I was assured by her, "so good and kind a heart when he kept sober."

I cannot comprehend the infatuation of women. After the boot-closer had behaved as ill as mechanic or man could do, squandered all their little furniture, and the fruits

of Sally's early savings, he ran off in a drunken frolic to Liverpool. She was compelled, to avoid starvation, to take service, and let her child go to the work-house. I thought myself fortunate, for both their sakes, in recommending her to Mrs Roberts. For ten months the boot-closer was not once heard of, and Sally looked a forlorn Penelope. He had gone to Dublin, and thence to Belfast, where we first heard of him in the hospital, ill of typhus. He should have had my leave to take time to recover. But what an unnatural monster did my fair friends, Mrs Roberts, Rachel Greene, and Nurse Wilks imagine me, when I suggested the propriety of letting Mr Hardy quietly lay his restless bones in Ireland, without disturbing his wife.

Blessings upon their kind, simple hearts!

He spoke to them who never had a *husband*!

Would I keep Sally from her duty?

Poor men's wives have often very hard conjugal duties compared with those of the ladies of the rich. Sally tied up her few remaining clothes, with my recommendatory letter to a very particular old favourite of mine, who had settled in Ireland, (whom I may yet introduce to my readers, by her maiden name of Mary Anne,) kissed her child, and trudged away to walk a couple of stages ere she took the top of the Liverpool coach, on her way to her sick husband. It was six weeks before she returned to us, thin as a greyhound, much dejected, and looking twenty years older; but all the women concerned assured me Sally had done her duty; for the extraordinary boot-closer said on his death-bed, that he sincerely repented of his unkindness; and he sent his blessing to his child, whom he solemnly charged Sally to bring up in the fear of God.

Excellent consistent man! for his sake Sally resolved she never would make a second choice. With her wages, and a little help, she could now take her child from the workhouse, and send it to the country to nurse; and as soon as it was five years old, Mrs Roberts determined to fetch the little girl home to be first a comfort, and then a help to its subdued mother. This prospect gave a zeal and warmth to poor Sally's services which no other motive could have furnished. She was permitted to go to see her child on a Sunday. Poor Sally Owen could not now have been known for the blithe, light-hearted, ruddy Welsh girl, who wont to sing like a bird all day at her work. She had plenty of work still; but her mistress was kind and sisterly, and in her little girl Sally had something dearly to love; so that, upon the whole, I believe, the widow of the accomplished boot-closer, who starved his family, and killed himself because he could make double wages when he chose to keep sober, (I do confess a spite at the man,) was upon the whole in fully as felicitous circumstances as ever his wife had been;—though I durst not say so.

From Mrs Roberts' Third Christmas Dinner, I walked home part of the way with my brother, Mr Sullivan, and Plague Madox, whom I saw to the Haymarket, near where he lodged.

"Very pleasant party," said the old buck, for the third time, as we stood to take leave. "Remarkably well-dressed, well-served dinner; so good, and *enough* only—no John Bull load. She is an excellent valuable creature that Sally Owen. I suppose the mutton was Welsh. Really Roberts' wife looks a hundred per cent better since she plumped out a little, and dressed in that neat plain way. Last year—I have not seen her since—she looked so fretful, tawdry, and haggard, that, upon my honour, I was concerned for Roberts. I don't think I would have visited them again, if Mrs James had not hinted at decided improvement. I am to dine at your brother's charming house to-morrow. Every thing delightful there, though I don't think the young ladies are better guitarists than Mrs Roberts."

"The difference being that Mrs Roberts is a tolerable performer on that charming unpretending instrument, which links the romance of sunny lands to a quiet English fireside, while my nieces——"

"Charming girls!" But the wind set in most cuttingly. "Eliza reminds me most of Abingdon of any lady I know." This was unintelligibly breathed through ten folds of a Barcelona handkerchief, and Madox went off, hating the east wind as much as he loved a pleasant dinner party, with all its accompaniments—guitar music included.

I could not forbear calling to congratulate Mrs Roberts next day. "Always at home to you, sir," said smiling Sally Owen to me, "though mistress has been so busy putting things to rights."—"Quite done now, though," cried Maria, opening the parlour door; "I know your knock so well."—It is pleasant to have friends, particularly female friends, that know one's knock. I like to hear it.

"Your triumph is complete, Mrs Roberts!" I said. "Plague Madox has pronounced you perfect! But you need never hope for the Pantague suffrage."

Maria was still laughing heartily, when Sally brought in a packet. I knew its contents before it was opened, for I had seen Madox purchase that morning, at an auction, a *whole lot* of cheap guitar music. No man in London could exchange this sort of notes for solid dinners more knowingly than my old acquaintance. I had foreseen that Mrs. Roberts, now fairly ranked among the comfortable dinner-giving women, was to have her share of the purchase.

"Confirmation strong!" cried Maria, laughingly holding out to me the printed sheet of music, inscribed in his best hand, 'With Mr. Madox's compliments to Mrs. George Roberts.' "But in spite of this polite note, and '*Zara's Ear-rings*' to boot," said Maria, "a charming bribe, no doubt, I do think a young couple like Roberts and myself, beginning life, may find, if we beat up diligently the highways and hedges, more suitable or desirable family guests than the Plague Madoxes of society. I have imbibed your own notions and Rachel Greene's of that in which true hospitality consists. They exclude the regular *diners-out*."

I must some day write the biography of my friend, Plague Madox; who had dined out for nearly thirty years upon the reputation of a farce, damned forty years ago, and three anecdotes of Sheridan; and this, though the ladies where he visited detested him with one accord.

MARY ANNE'S HAIR.—A LONDON LOVE TALE.

CHAPTER I.

"There was not," I have said, "when I first knew it, a more comfortable household than that of David Moir, among the two hundred and fifty thousand families, which then formed the mighty aggregate of the population of London."

My original acquaintance with my opposite neighbour, old Moir, was as a draught-player. He was a first-rate hand, and some of his countrymen, in his name—for David had no idiotic ambition—challenged London. A refugee French priest was, about the same time, my opponent in chess. I learnt to beat my master, the Abbe; but old Cairnbogue, as David was called by his countrymen, retained undisputed ascendency. The cool, dry, easy, unconscious manner in which he beat me was infinitely provoking. I gave up the contest for victory; and our friendship was prosecuted upon a new principle. I cannot tell what David liked me for, or if he cared, at this time, much about me at all; but he attracted me. He was the first Scotsman of the old school that I had ever known intimately. His phlegm; his dry humour; his accent, broad, and yet sharp; his odd turns of phrase, indicating a manner of thought quite new to me; and a certain vein of what I called antiquarianism, which ran through his discourse, combined to give him interest. He was no book-man, though he had received the common good education of his country; but he came from a part of the island where manners, habits, and modes of thinking, were some centuries older than those with which I was familiar. David was a *Jacobite* in politics, and, more wonderful! a *Whig* in religion; but more a feudalist than either the one or the other. His greatest man on earth, next to the Pretender, but in many points before him, was the Laird o' Brodie. The Laird, as David emphatically called him when our acquaintance ripened to intimacy—not Laird John, or James, or Robert, but The Brodie—the reigning potentate.

Though David's trade, for thirty years, had been to escort bullion wagons from wharfs to banks, and carry about bills of exchange, and all manner of papers significant of scrip, omnium, &c. &c. London and the *prestige* of riches had scarcely lessened his hereditary impressions of feudal rank. The celebrated speech of the clanswoman to her husband in the cave—"Come out, Donald, and be hanged, and no anger the Laird!" might to David have sounded sublime and pathetic.

David's insensibility to wealth may in part be accounted for by his very moderate participation in the profits of the Bank. It is certain that his fortunate *millionaire* countryman and employer only appeared in David's eyes, like a richer sort of Bailie of Banff or Forres, and the *Establishment* only a larger kind of shop dealing in money. During the mornings, David spoke of his employer as "the Master;" but in his hours of relaxation, his father's or uncle's old school-fellow uniformly diminished into the familiar *Tam*, his abbreviation of Thomas.

A certain portion of respect, regard, and Scottish affection established, David's ance-

dotes, strictures, and censures on his shrewd, vain, ostentatious, and lucky countryman, were free enough. He could partly understand, but never forgive, the court and aristocracy of London for visiting *Tam*, and partaking of his splendid shows, while David was morally certain, never one of them had yet paid their respects to our neighbour, Mrs. Gordon, the lame lieutenant's widow, and "a far-away cousin of The Brodie."

Mr. Moir's original lodging in London, while hanging on looking out for employment, was a small back attic in the house of which he afterwards became the proprietor, and which he has lately built anew from the foundation, with a handsome front, and three sashes a-row, the architectural glory of our lane. Among his many early difficulties and distresses, his original stock of £12 diminishing every day in spite of him, and no prospect of employment opening, David has often told me none ever pressed so hard as his old landlady — the aunt of his future wife — giving warning, not to himself, but to a cracked flute, on which, after reading (seated on his *kist*) a chapter in his Bible, he wont to bray away the dinnerless dinner hour, with "O'er Bogie," or "The Birks of Endermay," as the Pensive or the Comic Muse chanced to preside over the hollow and hungry hour.

Poor David, whose twin-born horrors, arising from London lodgings, were plunder and pollution, would have submitted to any thing rather than leave this attic sanctuary of his purity, and of his good stock of wire-knit hose and coarse linen. To this cross landlady's he had been recommended by a Scots coachman of *Tam's* as an honest house.

"With my heart in my mouth," said David — and his mouth would have held one even fully as large as was his honest circulatory organ—"Wi' my heart in my mouth, I locked the bit whistle in the kist, though it was all my comforter. I had another in this wilderness of brick and plaster. I could, by standing on the top o' the kist, have a keek from my four-paned skylight of a green spot out-over the timber-yard, there, behind us, with all its deals, logs, casks, and tar-barrels; and that ye'll allow *was* refreshing. How I leuch when Mrs. Nott called these bits o' green knublocks, the Surrey hills. 'Hills,' quoth she! — they were liker moudiewarp hillocks; —but they were aye something in a strange land."

It was plain to me that the magnitude and dignity of his native mountains was felt by David as ample compensation for the poverty of his country, and as fairly turning the scale in his favour against England and Mrs. Nott.

"Ye'll never have seen any thing like a real hill, I reckon, Mr. Richard, save maybe in the playhouse?" said David to me one evening after we had long been intimate.

"Only the Alps and Appenines, with a *keek*, as you term it, of the mountains of Norway." Here I had my Scot on the hip; but he did not yield.

"That's true — I forgot that; but ye were not like born among them — *to* them."

This was the sort of maundering which formed interludes to those games which David carried off from me with such easy superiority, and which first drew my liking to *him*, while he "loved *me* that I did listen to him."

"O man!" would he cry, warming up to cordial familiarity, "but a real hill does fill a body's heart. Could ye but see the Linns o' Dee, and there-away, where I once carried The Brodie's gun when a younker; or even our ain Forres Moss, where Macbeth met the witches, ye ken. It's nothing in the playhouse. I once threw three white shillings to the cocks for that nonsense. But if it were a blae misty day, the *rack* hanging low on the moor, and the whaups whistling, ye canna tell where, and the crack o' the Laird's gun, bursting out of the cluds as it were. Oh man! ——" David, like orators and poets, left the rest to imagination.

Mr. David Moir had obtained a respectable footing with lane, landlady, and Banking-house, by the fifth year of his sojourn in London. Mrs. Nott's original contempt of his country was giving way in favour of the sober, steady, punctually-paying individual, though she still thought it concerned her dignity to resent every attempt that her lodger made to introduce Scottish habits and Scottish cookery into her back attic,—and, though a rigid economist herself, to show a proper degree of contempt for his national *stinginess*.

The *smell* of certain dried little fishes — since highly prized in London as *Finnan Haddocks* — of which David received an annual supply, was as offensive to her *nose* in his attic, as his flute had been to the *ears* of the whole neighbourhood; but chance averted a rupture. Lodging-house keeping — though David did estimate highly the profits of Mrs. Nott, to which he contributed 3s. 9d. weekly — cannot, after all, be so

lucrative a calling as lodgers generally imagine. They probably calculate as authors do with publishers, clients with agents, or day-boarders with those who feed them. That is to say, as every body in this world is too apt to do, they grossly over-rate the advantages others derive from them, and underrate what they receive in return. David was utterly astonished when he heard of an *execution* in Mrs. Nott's house. There was his own liberal pay — the old player gentlewoman's in the back chamber on the second floor, 15d. a-week better, and my friend Harvey's, 15s. a-week, for what the landlady was pleased to call the drawing-room-floor: "And to see her sauciness!" continued David. This I suppose was a Scottish trait. "Sauciness" could not, in David's mind, be the quality of a landlady going back in the world.

David looked strictly into the affair. A heavy debt had been hanging over the poor woman's head from the death of her husband. On tolerably satisfactory security being given, David relaxed his gluey purse-strings; and as he rather, in business, approved an honest but moderate equivalent, next Sunday at noon saw him rejoicing over platter after platter of sheep's head broth. "Not," as he remarked, "as such a daintith and *delicate* might have been *readied* in The Brodie's kitchen, or even in a farm ha'-house in a landward parish at hame, but wonderful for a first attempt in this court." This was an affair which interested all the gossips of our lane; and from this era of Free Trade between the nations, and the recognition of a system of fair equivalents, Mr. Moir and Mrs. Nott lived on a much better understanding. Death removed the old player gentlewoman; and David, in a very cold winter, descended to her quarters, and with the aid of "a bed by night, a chest of drawers by day," rose to the brevet rank of a parlour lodger.

This room, in which our first games were performed, became the *beau-ideal* of a thrifty Scots bachelor's London crib. Here stood David's Sunday hat-box of mahogany, and his draught-board; and lo! an auctioned desk, with a new bookcase over it, containing Ossian, (Burns was not yet familiar,) Allan Ramsay, Ferguson's Poems, the Life of Wallace, the Scots Worthies, Blair's Sermons, and Ross's Shepherdess, (if I don't mistake the name,) all bought cheap, and each afterwards encased in substantial calf-boards. David was not one of your modern literary Scots, who have read every thing and know every thing. A hair-cloth easy chair, presented to David during a fit of rheumatism by an old and favourite female friend, closely connected with the C—— establishment, whom he still familiarly called *Cookie*, from her original vocation, and with whose eventful history he made me perfectly familiar, completed his catalogue of chamber-gear, independently of the garniture pertaining to Mrs. Nott; and, taken together, it showed so inveterate a purpose of bachelorism, that, though beyond the age of being surprised at the strangeness of marriages, I was rather astounded when I received David's invitation to do him the honour to attend him to church.

The case was this. In spite of David's ministrations of Scotch groat-gruel and Glenlivat toddy, poor old Mrs. Nott died one winter, of that cough which had indeed attacked and clung to her for the twenty preceding seasons; and David, her executor, was obliged to look about him. Quitting his grandfather's moorland farm could not have been more distressing to the lad than it was to the elderly thriving man to leave this lane, now endeared by its "old, familiar faces," and his snug parlour-chamber. He could imagine no second-floor back-apartment in London, where his broken flute, and his draught-board, and his bookcase, could be placed in such security, and appear to such advantage; and thus he was secretly charmed to hear a lady of a certain age, Mrs. Nott's sole heiress, who arrived in due time, *per* the Chelmsford wagon, declare, that as they were a large family at home, she was advised to try to carry on the House, (the lodging-house to-wit,) the furniture being hers, though it might be a rash thing in her, a *young* and unprotected woman, to make such a venture. I can imagine how David replied; and how self-seeking and disinterested kindness for the legatee contended in his honest heart, as he gravely — when urged as the person on whose judgment her "dear deceased aunt had such reliance," — counselled Miss Penny (Penelope) Nott, in this crisis of her fate, to carry on the house, allowing his own claim over the furniture to run on at ordinary interest.

Ladies have gained husbands in an incredible number of ways, if we may believe rumour. Mrs. Moir is alleged to have gained her *gudeman* in a manner which, to me at least, in all my experiences, is perfectly original. I have heard of women billiarding,

duetting, waltzing, hunting, boating, racing, gaming, versifying, mimicking, psalm-singing, sketching, nay, drinking themselves into *good matches;* but none who, like Miss Penny Nott, gained a husband by being taught by him to knit ribbed worsted hose. This accomplishment, which David had acquired while a herd in the heights of Morayshire, and which he still affectionately remembered in all its details, of the loop and the back-seam, and the rig-and-fur, though it had been nearly forty years in abeyance, he revived upon the reiterated instances of his maiden landlady, with whom he took tea as seldom as he civilly could avoid giving her inexperienced youth the solicited aid of his guiding counsel. There were many little hinges on which the affair finally turned, before David made up his mind to indict me to serve as his bridesman.

Imprimis, There was the bond over the furniture, which there was no prospect of ever being cancelled, save by such harsh measures as the gallant Scot never could have used to a woman. *Secondly,* The lease of the house was for sale, and a bargain. *Thirdly,* Miss Nott was really much more civil than her aunt, though David was not yet nearly so much at his ease with her as if her years had been three score instead of two twenties. *Fourthly,* But this was scarce a motive, for David, never thinking evil of any one, was no close or keen observer of female manners:—*Fourthly,* however, In twenty years he had regularly noted the maiden's annual visits to her deceased aunt, and she had always seemed a steady, solid, industrious, well-behaved young woman, "or elderly lass," with a taste for knitting worsted hose: and, *Finally,* and to crown all, and for ever determine David, When a *sugh* of scandal went abroad in our lane, and when Mrs. Baker tittered to Mrs. Chandler, and Irish Peg, the orange-woman, sniggered to Bob, the pot-boy, who carried in David's diurnal half-pint, he arose before me, in his mighty Norland wrath, and, slapping his thigh, gallantly swore that "Nae virtuous maiden had e'er owed the scathe o' her good name to a man o' the House o' Cairnbogue, and he should not be the first."

Bravo, man of the mountains!

> Hail, Usages of ancient mould,
> And Ye that guard them, Mountains old.

Cairnbogue, my readers are to know, was the many hundred acres of stone and heather which my friend's ancestors had rented from The Brodie, or some other northern Thane, for above three centuries. The House, of which he was the London representative, must have meant, if meaning it had, the chain of black, straggling huts, comprehending dwelling, barn, stable, and long cow *byre,* which were pitched about the lowland outskirts of that barren holding.

"No that I cared a ——, for my own part, for their clish-ma-claver,"—as David—who, on occasion, would crack his fingers, and swear in a moderate way—afterwards said to me, in referring to those laughing gossips; who assuredly could not have believed their own scandal, and whose roguish malice was very probably stimulated by David's profound stolidity of aspect and demeanour, and the indescribable air of prudery which, as a young lady of a certain age, acting in the matron's office of lodging-letting, distinguished my friend Miss Penny; particularly when she impressed David's sturdy arm into the rather reluctant service of escorting her to hear some favourite divine at his Presbyterian chapel.

But I am impatient to get to my god-daughter, my little Mary Anne, the "Sally of our alley," "The Venus of Trotterdown Hill," and must, therefore, make shorter work than Miss Nott might have approved, with the ceremonial of her wedding-day.

I still remember with what resentment I heard my countrywoman secretly explain, and apologize to me for marrying a Scotsman. She, Essex-born, and salt-marsh bred, to wed with a man of the heathery mountains.—"It was so odd; but such things were ordained to happen, and she hoped all would turn out for the best."

It indeed turned out remarkably well. For the encouragement of all couples who begin wedded life with a very slender stock of love, passionate and undiluted, I am bound to say that I have seldom known a more *comfortable* union, according to the fifth degree on my scale matrimonial. I am afraid David never was a lover at all, at least of Miss Penny, much less an ardent one, though the poor man did his very best to assume certain requisite grimaces in his bridegroom state; and sang "Tullochgorum," "The Ewie wi' the Crooked Horn," and many other jovial Scottish songs at the merry wedding-supper.

On the hint of Mrs. Chandler, he bought and presented to his bride a certain Paisley shawl. A Cairngorum brooch was a relative idea; not that David would have grudged to do so, but the thing never occurred to him.

"He had little skill o' the women folk," he owned, and he ever remained a singularly undemonstrative husband in outward show and small attentions, though what is usually called a dutiful, if not an affectionate one.

My new friend, Mrs. Moir, bore David's "*vulgarity*," fully better than I at first expected. Perhaps she loved him not the less for that "quantity," which, as she informed me, she had to endure from his awkward habits. These were all placed against Scotland and his accent, which remained most undisguisedly Scottish, and provincially Moray. To counterbalance those severe domestic afflictions came the esteem in which David was held by his employers of the Bank—the cancelled bond—the better income—the approbation of Messieurs Baker and Chandler, and their ladies; the witty congratulations of Irish Peg, and the grins of Pot-Bob; together with the regard of myself, the philosopher, and of Harvey, the fine gentleman of our lane. It was indeed a satisfactory union. To increase its delights, the Banking-house, on the marriage-cake being, by the address of Mrs. Moir, presented to a lady connected with the establishment, on her suggestion, its head, in a forenoon fit of good-humour, raised David's salary thirty pounds. My thrifty, disinterested friend, no more thought of plotting for an increase of salary than of lavishing his superfluous cash; that is to say, all his income above one guinea a-week, to which David, on his marriage, raised his expenditure—the House going on as before, under the active management of his wife.

I never had more occasion to admire David than on this advance of salary. He was told that he owed it to the lady, whose generosity, beauty, and blandishments, though all had been tried, had never yet been able to shake his fealty, or withdraw him from his original allegiance to his old friend, *Cookie*, who had now, for a long period, been the wife of his master. I can conceive the wry faces and contortions of repugnance our Man of the House of Cairnbogue must have made when informed that he must go, in his bridegroom suit, to thank his patroness for his increased salary.—Though he had a proper respect for £30 a-year additional, or rather for twelve shillings save some fractions a-week—for David rather counted by weeks than years—nothing could induce him to commit what he considered an act of treachery to his old friend, and of personal degradation to himself.

"Tam got into a tantrum," David afterwards told me, when talking of this affair. "He thinks a' the warld should be as beglamoured by his glory and his gold, and his Idol, that playactor cuttie ——, as he is himself, poor auld ne'er-do-well; and lightlie his lawful wife and her bonny bairntime :——"

I must not go into the particulars of David's tale. The Kirk had laid on him, however it may fare with his richer expatriated countrymen,

The strong hand of her discipline.

Religion had given him strict moral principles; feudalism—yes feudalism—clanship—in spite of my philosophy I must own it—warm and grateful social feelings; though they might not always be the most enlightened or expansive that philosophy may imagine.

"I slept little that night," continued David. "There was poor Penny, three weeks after marriage, lying snoring laighly beyont me, little dreaming what was hanging over us. If I had been a single man, I could have ta'en a knot o' ropes and gone to the wharf; and I had character enough left to get me a porter's ticket in a city and neighbourhood where I have lived upwards of thirty years. But what would Penny say to that? It's an auld tale in my country-side, Mr Richard, that a man will never thrive unless his wife let him; but I have an odd notion that it is still more difficult for him (especially if in office like me) to be an *honest* man unless the wife bauldly say *yea*. It would have gone to my heart, too, to have eaten another man's bread than Tam's. Auld sinner as he is, we had been lang acquaint. I think I drank an extra pint next night, when there was never another word from him about it; and sang 'O'er Bogie,' and ne'er let on to Penny. Wives shouldna ken a' thing, Mr Richard. Ye'll find that out when ye come to marry."

If my readers have not now some tolerable notion of my little Mary Anne's progenitor, I am sorry for it; for I can spend no longer time on David. Never was a child more welcome or more valuable to her parents in their humble way than was my pretty goddaughter. It was Mary Anne's dawning smiles that first genially introduced David to his new fireside, and made him feel at home, after having, for eighteen months, left his old chamber above stairs, and sat opposite Miss Penny. It was the child that even taught him to conquer the habit of calling his wife by that unmatronly name. The individuality of the middle-aged, staid couple, was soon lost in that of the little stranger. Mrs. Moir now first found for her husband the

satisfactory denomination, mingling respect with familiar affection, of "My Mary Anne's Papa," and David converted his blundering "Miss Penny" into "Our bit lassie's mother."

I think it went a great way to convert David from Jacobitism, which, however, had waxed dim of itself, that my goddaughter, by what both her parents, and all the females of our alley thought a marvellous coincidence, was born on the birthday of the late Princess Charlotte. Mrs. Moir, in particular, could never have done admiring the good luck which predicted some extraordinary stroke of good fortune to "The Princess," which became one of my many caressing names for little Mary Anne.

David Moir was a poor, unlettered, *vulgar* Scotsman, a porter to C—— & Co. the bankers.—I was a broken merchant—a chagrined, pitied, baffled, and thrown-out man of the world; an oddity, a crazy humorist, something of an early scholar, and betraying a touch of the new philosophy; yet we two spent many tolerably happy evenings together; at least when Mrs. Moir, grown more notable and active than ever, now that she "had a family to provide for," left us alone, with the draught-board, and the nursing of Mary Anne. The child, though merely a delicious, diamond—*i. e.* a very little—edition of my friend, and, indeed, so like him as to provoke her mother for the honour of Essex beauty, was really a very pretty creature; or, perhaps, she was only the first child I had ever closely watched as it grew. Perhaps she was not beautiful, not even pretty, after all. It was, I acknowledge, impossible to reduce any mouth in imitation of friend David's to the size or curvature of the lips of either loves, nymphs, or graces. But his daughter had his mild and meaning Scottish eyes—not *bright* but ever ready to kindle "like fire to heather set"—a lovely, pure skin, and sweet dimples; and, to ornament her head, David's bunches of carrots, now frosted, had been refined in some alembic of the Graces, till, in her third year, they flowed in redundant Ossianic tresses of "paly gold," over her little ivory shoulders, and down to her, not yet, clipsome waist. No shears were permitted to approach those precious ringlets. Mrs. Baker, with her lace-capped little ones, might wonder, and Mrs. Chandler protest and remonstrate; David was inflexible ont his one point, and Mrs. Moir was willing to be forced to honour and obey; so the ringlets hung down to the ledges of the pew on Sundays, to the admiration of the whole Caledonian congregation of London Wall:—or David thought so, which was much the same thing.

From October to March, in a particular year, this little maid regularly made a third at our draught-board, seated on her father's knee; who, between crowning and capturing, would still clumsily fondle or dandle the pouting or smiling child, to the chanted romance of "The Lord o' Gordon's Three Bonny Daughters," or the heroic strain of "The Red Harlaw,"—and sometimes in the plenitude of his admiration, and the simplicity of his heart, David would break off to ask me if she was not as bonnie as a Flander's babbie; while I, from a sound conscience, protested that she was ten times prettier than the most resplendent of the beauties specified—Dutch Dolls, to wit.

"And, O! Mr Richard," the thoughtful father would exclaim, "what a terrible town this to bring up a lassie in!" And David would sigh, and resume his *crooning* lullaby about the indifference to rank, and the power of love over "The bonny Jeanie Gordon."

In our first approaches to any thing resembling demonstrative affection, the advances were all on Mary Anne's side, of which, long afterwards, I never failed to remind her. This, as she grew up, she heard with maidenly smiles and blushes of the purest good-humour, until one unlucky day in her eighteenth year, when conscience made my raillery glance sharply aside,—stamping her small foot in sudden passion, while the glow of her eyes and cheeks scorched up the bursting tears of love, pride, shame, and resentment, and indignantly repelling my implied suspicion, she clasped her knit fingers across her brows, exclaiming—

"You insult and wrong me, Mr Richard; I did THAT,—but I would die!—die ten thousand times, sooner than care for any one who did not first care for me!" Poor little Mary Anne!—*care* was her maidenly substitute for the obnoxious word, *love,* which she would not, in her own case, have used honestly for the world. Alas! she did not feel it the less. *One* was her word for *man,* or rather for —— but no matter—her secret was still safe with me. I could only sigh, and, with a slight variation, repeat old David's ejaculation of fifteen years before: "O, what a world to bring up a lassie in!"

I must glance back on these fifteen years—before that world, with its turbulent scenes and troubled passions, came to disturb us; and when Mary Anne, unprompted, remembered

me in her baby prayers, and dispensed to me the good-night kiss, which that good, industrious woman, her mother, partly grudged, as something going out of the family, and partly resented as an indecorum in *Miss*, as she called the child. How I came to love this little thing better than other children, and even than my own nieces, may be simply accounted for by her being so much in my way, exceedingly ingratiating, very fond of myself; and, above all, that her mother, being kept off by her continual housewifery, no one, not even a nursemaid, interfered to check and restrain the free course and interchange of our affection, by the peremptory observance of nursery etiquette, curtsies, and pretty behaviour. Nothing like Free Trade! There was yet another reason: I had not much, indeed I had no experience of children's characters; but, compared with the romps, Missies, fine little fellows, and frugiverous, or tart-loving monsters, whom I usually encountered, my own goddaughter possessed, as I imagined, great talents, and uncommon natural sensibility; and was already, in her little mould of woman, an exquisitely feminine creature — a living thing, by which, without interfering in any way with her education, I might test the educational theories of Rousseau, which I was studying about this time.

I hope my friends will not believe that I was in the smallest degree influenced in my studies by the imperial ordinance of the dashing dame of my brother's broker, Mrs. Pantague, namely, whom my readers have already seen as a guest at young Mrs. Roberts' unlucky Christmas Dinner. This consequential lady had laid her commands upon me "to throw together my ideas on female education, as she certainly did mean, if possible, to retire to the Isle of Wight, or some quiet watering place, say Worthing—to take *Miss Edgeworth* with her, (books meant,) and give herself up the whole season to forming the characters of her sweet twins, Charlotte Victoria and Victoria Charlotte." I heard all with the profound bow that became one so honoured.

This lady was, according to my sister Anne, one of my especial female pets. She still says this was because the lady wished to patronize me. — I deny that; but I own I did the woman, at one time, the honour of giving her a very respectable share of my dislike,—while contempt was all she really merited. There was something in her hard, undaunted, unquestioning, assumption of superiority in her circle, that was infinitely irritating in some of my old moods. It was my misery, at first, not to be able to feel her insignificance, — or, if I ever did, her cool, unconscious audacity again threw me out.

In our social contests, she, the fine lady of her *clique*, had the advantage of being cased in the hide of a buffalo; while my thin cuticle might be likened to gold-beater's leaf, barely covering the raw integuments. This Mrs. Pantague, whom I allowed to be an occasional tormentor for some years, though only the daughter of a Bath hotel-keeper and the wife of a stock-broker, might have gained high fame as a duchess, had she achieved that enviable rank. Her consequence, and her *inconsequence* — (I cannot English it) — her *hauteur*, her apparently unconscious effrontery, her total disregard and contempt, or, perhaps, ignorance of the feelings of others — her love of show and expense, and the active energy of her style of dissipation, might have adorned the highest circles. They made her the wonder of her own. The woman really had talents. She was mischievous, not *insignificant*. She would, in the mood, have won your pity for the severe hardships to which she, hard-working woman, was exposed in spending her husband's income; and she certainly believed herself entitled to universal sympathy and admiration, for the magnanimity and spirit with which she bore up under the continual fatigue of rounds of engagements, with the third-rate great people to whom, reversing the common rule, she made her way by audacity, afterwards holding her place by obsequiousness.

We shall meet again.—In the mean time, the porter's-load of works on education, which she unhesitatingly ordered to our lane from a fashionable bookseller's shop, was the accidental means of turning my thoughts into the channel she had indicated. My friends will not believe me so simple, nor yet so very humble, as to have exposed in her drawing-room the recondite ideas on female education of "that clever odd creature, Richard Taylor, the particular friend of B—— and of C——." In such circles, a literary man, as they called me, like a suspicious bill, always, I have remarked, requires at least two endorsers. I could not expose my precious parcel of ideas to the ridicule of being paraded for three days among the other show-boards of Mrs. Pantague's drawing-room — to be afterwards overlaid by its rubbish of fashionable Annuals, vulgar caricatures, and tawdry trinketry.

I did, however, admire the idea, not an

uncommon one among ladies, of forming, or forcing, character in a season like an asparagus-bed,—but that, I believe, takes several successive seasons; and having returned Mrs Pantague's books, I got a Rousseau and Miss Edgeworth of my own; and, while Mrs Hannah More was writing for the benefit of her Princess, Mr Richard Taylor was cogitating no less anxiously for the good of his own equally beloved one,—his Mary Anne.

Chance sent my Princess something better than a mitred tutor; since Mary Anne's empire was, I hoped, to be over a few devoted hearts, and many affectionate and attached ones.

I never saw, save at the interview when she was bequeathed to my friendship, the Sœur Agathé—the exiled nun, the sister of my old friend, the refugée Abbé La Martine.—Blessings on the French tongue! and on my own imperfect knowledge of it,—for many a happy hour has it provided for me during my metropolitan pilgrimage!—Many years before this time an act of common civility, or of common humanity to a foreigner in distress, gained for me, owing solely to my slight knowledge of French, the friendship of the exiled Abbé. I had afterwards been able to procure him some teaching in the City. It was in vain that I attempted to dissuade him from joining the mad expedition to Quiberon Bay. He devoted himself to destruction with his eyes open; for Agathé sanctioned, blessed the enterprise.

I shall ever upbraid myself for the vulgarity of those associations which made me feel shocked when I first saw the sister of my friend. But one somehow always imagines a nun beautiful, and, at least, not *very* old. She was very old, very small, very pale,—of a figure originally slight, and now almost etherealized, by rigorous fasts, and the rigid exercise of her rule of devotion. Republican as I am sometimes accused of being, I could not help venerating the exalted sentiment of loyalty and piety which animated those heavenly-minded beings—catholics, bigots, infatuated royalists as they were. Why is it that the shrines of the False Oracles so often allure the purest and most fervent worshippers?

I shall never forget the figure of the aged nun, bending to receive from the brother, who was many years younger than herself, the priestly benediction; nor the look of almost inspiration with which, without one tear, or a faltering accent, she sent him, The servant of the Cross, forth in the strength of the Cross, to battle for his Prince with the Sword. I could have envied, while I pitied, her enthusiasm; and, as it was, I peevishly thought, When will the cause of MANKIND inspire women with kindred sentiments? Is Hero-worship the natural destiny of man, till it degenerate into doting superstition like this, which still throws illusion around the degenerate, grovelling, and sensual race of St Louis?

We never exactly learned how La Martine fell. He was understood to have perished in some obscure mountain skirmish in La Vendée.

Long after this event it required all my address and influence to prevail with Mrs. Moir to allow Sister Agathé the miserable shelter of one of her attics, though at a fair stipend. She, the gentlest and most benevolent of God's creatures, was disliked as a Frenchwoman—and, moreover, as an *old* Frenchwoman—(Mrs. Moir had never before seen an aged specimen)—as a Papist, a nun, and an "odd sort of body," who saw no one; never quitted her chamber; wore a strange coarse black garb; and gained a miserable living by weaving cushion-lace.* That I carried the point, was not so much from being Mary Anne's godfather, and the "*genteelest* of David's personal friends," as that my friend Harvey was exhibiting symptoms of being more than usually sensible to the drawing-room smoking.

The curiosity of childhood, and the dawning sense of the marvellous and mysterious, soon led my goddaughter to slip up the stairs stealthily, and scratch at the yielding door of Sister Agathé's garret. The sweetly modulated voice, the winning smile, and natural courtesy of the nun, captivated the opening affections of Mary Anne, who ran to her on every opportunity, caught her language and her manner, and gradually became to her, what the solitary *religieuse* must, I fear, have felt, even sinfully dear,

Mary Anne's first trials—and I have no doubt that they were most grievous ones to

* Irish Peg and myself afterwards became disinterested agents for the disposal of this delicate commodity among ladies, and females of inferior degree. My fair customers lay among the better orders, whose rapacity for *a bargain*, knowing how my wares came, often enraged and disgusted me. Peg's customers lay among small green-grocers, pot-house keepers' wives, and hucksters driving a brisk trade; who, if they coveted a bit of real *Wallenchines*, never grudged to pay freely and even generously for it. I must make a chapter of my lace trade. It brought me in contact with some strange female propensities.

a child of her sensibility—arose from the prejudices of her mother, and her rudeness to this poor nun. Mrs. Moir, though partly sensible of the advantages the little girl derived from the instructions of Sister Agathé, grudged the over-payment of the child's vehement and even passionate affection for the nun. Poor Mary Anne! It was, even thus early, her misfortune to love too rashly, and too well,—and to suffer for it.

Mrs. Moir would, as she told me, have grudged nothing in reason by the month, or quarter, or lesson, for the child's education: she could, thank God! pay in money; but no Frenchwoman should dare to steal her daughter's affections from her. Sister Agathé had often, before this, secretly mingled her tears with those of her affectionate pupil; and it was long before she could summon resolution to acquaint me that her duty required that she should leave this house, again to go forth among strangers and heretics: this last she did not say. She blamed no one. It was Irish Peg's scolding accost at the head of the lane, and Mary Anne's tear-stained face, that first acquainted me with this odious domestic persecution. Peg, a generous Tipperary termagant, (or *randy*, as David called her,) and a true Catholic, was the thorough-going friend of the friendless nun; not the less, perhaps, that she cordially detested Mrs. Moir, and did not understand one word of French.

My expostulatory conversation with the worthy lady of David, showed me English prejudice, as it existed in female bosoms in the last generation, in all its narrowness and rankness. On a patient cross-examination, I found that Agathé's only faults were the black garb and close coif-veil of her order; untidiness (sometimes) implied by certain spots on her floor, which were a dreadful affliction to Mrs. Moir's fidgety neatness; and, above all, the occasional visits of Irish Peg. If the Irish woman could have ascended by wings, she might at first have been forgiven, but her steps necessarily fell on the stair's carpet; and though the poor orange-woman, in reverence of English niceness, sometimes actually stole up stairs without her shoes, and in what she called her "vamps," that was no palliation; since it was correctly imagined, that she had no good tale to rehearse at the end of her journey, though one of which, haply, the nun comprehended not a word. The humour of the landlady fell somewhat, when I calmly pointed out to her the injury she was doing her child; but it rose again when I fairly acquainted her that the aged sister of my dear friend La Martine, should remain the inmate of no house where she was not treated with every respect. This was pushing matters to an extreme on which the lady had not counted.

"Let her go," she exclaimed, with the hyena-laugh of malignant feelings,—"a blest riddance. Had it not been to oblige you, sir—" But Mary Anne, a silent and most anxious listener, started from her stool, crying—

"And if Agathé go, then Mary Anne goes!" And the child burst into tears. This sally, in a creature so gentle and docile, and the still more generous feeling it expressed, provoked the mother, who violently and repeatedly struck her child before I could interfere. I could have knocked the woman down, had I not been better engaged in shielding within my arms my dear little goddaughter, whom I kissed, and pressed to my heart as if for the first time, and have loved ever since with a new love, the sudden growth of that moment; a passion which I may say rivals in tenderness, and has often exceeded in anxiety, the paternal affection of old David himself.

I was but too happy to restore the general peace on terms rather favourable, at least, for Mary Anne and her amiable *Bonne*; that is, if the other contracting party had kept faith—which she did not. It is a trait of my countrywoman, who was too English, too proud, and, according to her light, too honest to accept of gratuitous service from the despised poor, that on this Friday, and other meagre days, she commissioned her daughter, who, at ten years old, had ten times her sense, and a thousand times her delicacy, to carry to the thin etherealized Catholic recluse a huge slice of plum-pudding! Mary Anne either swallowed as much as she could herself, or dexterously conveyed such rations to Irish Peg,—too delicate to expose her mother, or, as she imagined, to affront her tutoress, whose refusal of such gifts, however polite, would have mortally offended the insular power.

I am afraid that these little concealments, though practised for the most amiable purpose, laid the foundation of future evil in the naturally ingenuous mind of my goddaughter. But before this went too far, she had lost the beloved and revered friend of her childhood.—Let me recall them on this evening of the general pacification. It forms an era in the history of our Princess.

The window of my second-floor bedchamber, and the window of Sister Agathe's attic, stood at right angles; for nurse Wilks's is a stately three-storeyed pile. Lovers might have held intercourse, and friends with long arms might have shaken hands, across the intervening space. When I wished at any time to have a lattice conference with my Princess, I had only to draw up my casement. For the first twelve years of her life, Mary Anne, if within sight or ear-shot, ever obeyed the signal. On this sunshiny evening — sunshine after storm in the heavens and in our lane — up went my casement to catch the breeze from the unseen river, and up sprang Sister Agathé's. What could be prettier than the home picture it revealed! The happy little maid, now all smiles, sitting within the muslin screen and the embowering mignonette, singing, and tossing about her lace bobbins with the indescribable *petillante* air of a French girl, and anon stopping to nod or kiss her hand to "*le bon, petit Monsieur Richard*," while, retired from view, the nun kept fondly brushing out those luxuriant golden tresses, disturbed from their now usual conventual neatness of arrangement by the tempestuous day we had passed; and over her attenuated form towered the broad face and broader grins of Peg Plunkett, come openly to sing *Te Deum* for Mrs. Moir's defeat.

I could not conclude the chapter more happily than with this view of three of the leading female characters of our lane; and while the evil influences that were darkening around my goddaughter were still but faintly foreshadowed.

CHAPTER II.

Mary Anne was in her thirteenth year when we lost, by rapid, but gentle decay, her friend and instructress, Sister Agathé. Had I never heard of the immortality of the soul of man, I would have received intimation of this great truth from the life and death of that poor nun. She could not be said to die: her soul exhaled from a frame that had already nearly thrown off every earthy and grosser particle. For the last ten days of her life, while her spirit enkindled, and burned brighter and brighter to its close, her only sustenance was a few drops of wine and water, administered by her young, weeping nurse. The devotees who crowded to her couch in the last days of her life, would fain have cried, "A miracle!" but the time was not propitious.

It was painful to me to lay the attenuated, the almost etherealized body, among the huddled festering heaps of a common London grave-yard, swelling with the mounds of past generations; but there were pious rites, decent regrets, solemn ceremonial, and, what is of far more price, tears which purified the living, while they fell in oblation to the dead. My friend, Mrs. Plunkett, the orange-woman, had it of kind and country to get up a few reverential tears in honour of the dead, even when the claim was merely one of neighbourhood or slight acquaintance; and she sincerely "wept the blessed saint," though the next hour saw her, necessarily, perhaps, wrangling with her customers, or calling her wares. The grief of my goddaughter was a more profound feeling. To a creature of her age, when gifted with her depth of heart, the death-bed of one beloved is a powerful preacher. Among the first intelligible sentences that she spoke to me was, "Oh! how could I so weep for my mother's chidings, and my own little crosses, when for *her* I can now do no more than weep!"

As Agathé's executor, I thought it proper to put aside, for a time, those books of Madame Guyon and other enthusiasts and mystics which she had daily perused with so much unction, and bequeathed to Mary Anne, as the most precious legacy. Property she had none. Her burial charges were bestowed by Christian charity, in which it is but justice to Mrs. Moir to say, that, with all her perverseness, she was not at this time backward; and yet, strange woman! she had grudged her daughter's love to the living nun, as she now did her tears to the departed angel.

After the death of Agathé, her pupil became for a season morbidly fond of solitude. The bustle of the family below stairs, the sharp tones of their voices, the creaking of doors and shoes, were painful and irritating to her nerves; and her only happiness was to spend whole days, shut up in the little apartment, where she found so much food for memory, and leisure for musing, and where alone she said she was happy.

I quite agreed with Mrs. Moir, that too much of this "moping" would never do. I took Agathé's place as instructor,—that is to say, for fifteen minutes a-day or so, we studied geography together, read a little Italian, in which I was able to be her schoolmaster, and kept alive our French, in which

Mary Anne far excelled me. I also supplied ner with a few suitable books; but I soon discovered, with some alarm, and also I fear amusement, that by the good offices of Mrs. Plunkett and her children, Mary Anne contrived, through aid of her father's secret half-crowns, to supply herself clandestinely with a great many; and was, at the age of fifteen, far deeper in the Mysteries of Udolpho, and the Romance of the Black Forest, than myself. There had been detections, storms, threatenings, and tears in abundance. Coming generations owe to Sir Walter Scott and some of the late novelists, the open sanction of indulgence in the contraband reading which, being made criminal in their grandmothers, was attended by some of the consequences of crime. The *industrious* habits of Mrs. Moir were opposed to all reading; her ignorance or moral prejudices, to all novel-reading, without any exception,—save for an abridged Pamela. I knew not rightly how to decide between mother and daughter; and as free trade was prohibited, I went on winking hard at the smuggling system.

The manœuvres of the girl to conceal the furtive volume were to me wickedly amusing. She sat in a window-seat *à la Turque*, her work in her lap, the subject of study conveniently placed under her legs, ready to be perused, but on the instant concealed, if the mother's step was heard approaching from the kitchen. As she was a very nimble sempstress, the small quantity of work done did not lead to detection. This, with mornings, bits of the night, when a supply of candles could be got, and hours when mamma was at market, supplied a good deal of leisure to a girl devouring tales of sentiment and wonder with the green appetite of fifteen.

I repeatedly endeavoured, as a measure of safety, to obtain a relaxation of the maternal rule on this point; but Mrs. Moir appeared to become more obstinate from opposition. Wherever she had obtained her principles of criticism, to me they appeared singular enough. One day I saw poor Mary Anne detected in the very act of stealthily reading Werter, the fascinations of which had thrown her off her guard. The dangerous volume was taken from her with very unnecessary violence, as she had never dreamed of opposition, or of fighting to retain the harbinger of Goethe's genius; and I found that Mrs. Moir's fears were not of *love* but *suicide*.

"A disobedient little minx, idling her precious time with a book that teaches people to kill themselves!" Save for my goddaughter's tears I should certainly have laughed. The farther history of the denounced volume had a very different effect on me from that which it produced on the mother. Mary Anne denied that the book had been procured in the usual way by the Irishwoman, in a manner that convinced me of her truth. Her mother insulted her by broad and rude disbelief of her statement, and my goddaughter became indignant and sullen. But violent threats against her Irish agent,—nothing less, indeed, than utter ruin in soul, body, and estate,—would have drawn the whole truth from the weeping girl, when another actor came on the scene.

This was a lodger Mrs. Moir had obtained some months before, who, passing the open parlour door, and hearing the dispute, stept in.

"If there be harm done, I am the guilty person, madam. It was I that lent Miss Mary Anne this book,—not my poor countrywoman at the head of the lane." Mary Anne, covered with blushes, drowned in tears, and, in an agony of youthful shame, hid her face with her hands.

"Certainly Mr. Lyndsay Boyle, that makes a great difference. My girl getting a book in loan from a gentleman in our own family, and throwing away her pocket-money, wasting her time, and conniving with a low Irishwoman — I beg pardon, sir, — improper to smuggle books into my house at any rate — makes all the odds in the world."

"Certainly, madam," said the young fellow, with a look even more sarcastic than his disdainful tone. "May I then be permitted to offer to Miss Mary Anne such volumes as my scanty collection affords that can give her any pleasure?"

"She will be greatly obliged," replied the sensible mother.

"Indeed, I don't want—I won't have any more," cried the girl, stealing a hasty look at myself, which procured me the honour of a more searching than ceremonious scrutiny from her new friend.

With an attempt at complacence, he said, "I am glad to understand that you, sir, have more liberal ideas of books."

"This is more a question of the propriety of certain loans than of studies," was my somewhat pragmatical reply; for I was indeed uneasy and even alarmed, I knew not very well for what,—and pleased when the gentleman, bowing very slightly, walked off. I was, however, by no means satisfied with the hasty, timid glance Mary Anne, now first

daring to look up, sent after him and her mother, who followed him out.

"Tell me all about this, my dear Mary Anne?" I sat down with her on her window-seat. I took her hand. I allowed her in silence to weep on.

"Mr. Lyndsay Boyle heard mamma scolding me one day—and perhaps I deserve to be scolded—and scolding poor Mrs. Plunkett; and he asked Betty about it, and sent me books by her several times, which I have liked to read, and I did not like to be so rude as refuse to take them; and indeed that is all!"

"Positively all?"

"Almost all. *Once* Mr. Lyndsay Boyle asked my father to take him to chapel with us—he is from the North of Ireland, and his mother is a Presbyterian;—*once* he met me in the rain, and turned and brought me to the head of the lane under his umbrella; and *once* he bowed to mamma and myself as we were returning from church, and he passing in a little open carriage with another gentleman."

What an accurate memory for *items!* I liked it not; though I was charmed with the candour, and even the minuteness of the avowal; and the delicacy—for I am afraid it was rather intuitive delicacy than deliberative wisdom—which led my goddaughter to declare, that "she would take no more books from Mr. Lyndsay Boyle, because it made her feel strange."

That very evening I beset my sister Anne afresh, with an old scheme of having Mary Anne taken as a half-boarder in the excellent school at Bognor, at which my nieces and several of their juvenile friends had been educated. I had seen something of the ladies by whom the seminary was conducted. I liked their letters, for they were not very clever, nor well-written; and they said nothing at all to the mothers about their "*talented* pupils," or "the remarkable genius of the very interesting charge committed to them,"—a customary phraseology of some boarding-school letters, which I plead guilty to hating.

In the mean time, I undertook to supply my goddaughter with healthful books. I had all along done so to some extent; but had never properly calculated on the inordinate diseased appetite, be it for chalk or romances, which may consume an ill-managed girl of fifteen.

While the Bognor negotiation was pending, came the period when I earned from Mary Anne the name of THE GOOD GENIUS; and she has since told me, that my sudden appearances, and crossings of her secret paths, at this time, in places the most unexpected, seemed to her absolutely supernatural. Conscience is the mother of superstition.

Levity, fickleness, affectation, the love of dress and amusements, were none of my fears for Mary Anne. Her nature—Heaven knows whence she derived it!—was too deep and passionate to make the common errors of girlhood very dangerous to her. I would rather have seen her curling her hair, and making up dresses all day long,—or at twenty balls, caparisoned in gauze and flowers, and perspiring in the gallopade, than as I once surprised her "under the shade of melancholy boughs," leaning—frightened at herself and at every thing around her—on the arm of that confounded young Irishman, listening to music, which a set of young men had, that summer, got up for the delectation of their fair neighbours, about the Temple Gardens. Her blushes, her trembling, her apparently agonizing consciousness of shame and wrong, where another girl would have felt lightly enough, made the matter worse. She drew away her arm pettishly and petulantly, then looked with anxious deprecation on her offended companion; and though she voluntarily took my arm, and begged to go home with me, I believe she struggled with her tears the whole way. Yet to go home was her own earnest proposal.

The deuce was in the girl; she was verily *bewitched.*

Upon another occasion, a few weeks afterwards, I certainly, by perfect accident, came suddenly upon my goddaughter, with one or two young companions, this same young Irishman and another lad, stepping into a boat for a pleasure sail, in apparently high but fluttered spirits. Female conscience was not slumbering, though Mary Anne had bid it go to sleep. She started—almost screamed; and obeying my eye, like a fascinated bird, slowly advanced to me.

"Mary Anne, why will you leave us?" cried the girls. "Mr. Lyndsay Boyle is to show us a beautiful new steamer at Blackwall, Mr. Richard, cried one." I did not interfere.

"Indeed, indeed, I cannot go—I must not go. Do not fancy me very capricious." I would rather she had gone ten times than seen that alarmed, deprecating look.

The youth, the projector of the party, glowed with resentment, divided between my goddaughter and myself. Her tears partly

disarmed him; but still, haughtily enough, he said, "Miss Mary Anne must act as she thinks best," and he pushed off the little barque, leaving the damsel to a day of sadness, imbittered by reflection on her folly, her caprice, but above all, I fear, by the dread of her new admirer's displeasure.

I was not sorry to find that he soon met flirting society, where he was not distracted by girls having qualms of conscience, scruples of delicacy, tears, caprices, unequivocal marks of tenderness alternating with fits of pettishness, pride, and pouting disdain of attentions more lively than profound. In flirtations with the Miss Bakers, the Miss Chandlers, and others of our neighbours, the young Irishman forgot, or seemed to forget, the little spoiled whimsical girl for whom his good-nature and gallantry had been piqued, when he saw her persecuted by her vulgar mother for the congenial sin of reading romances. The mother was the cause of a final estrangement, at which I rejoiced; for, so far I fear as Mary Anne was personally concerned, every fresh love-quarrel and pouting-fit only deepened those feelings that were hourly gaining alarming power over her. It was not till long afterwards that I was made acquainted with the circumstances of the final quarrel.

"How I long to be at Bognor, and far away from this," said my goddaughter to me one evening, — and this was often repeated: but when the journey was finally arranged, in a few weeks afterwards, she wept in secret incessantly; and honest David would have altered the whole arrangement, save for her own good sense and my firmness. A party of her young friends spent the evening previous to her departure with her. Mr. Lyndsay Boyle, on the mother's invitation, made one; and the old lady treated us with a little supper. The Irishman was a handsome, lively young fellow; with the frank, ingratiating manners of his country, — eloquent, full of frolic, and with just that slight touch of *swagger* which sits so gracefully upon the sons of the Sister Isle, and on them alone. He fairly eclipsed all the *John-Bull beaux* of Mrs. Moir's circle; and one might have sworn that he had turned the heads of all the five girls present, save *one*. Even I might have been deceived, but for the slight tremor of voice with which Mary Anne tried, and failed, to return the "*Farewell*," cordially, but somewhat carelessly addressed to her by the gentleman, in anticipation of her early journey in the morning.

For the next twelve months, my goddaughter lived, and, I believe, prospered at Bognor. At the second holidays, she would still have declined to come home, so anxiously occupied was she, as she stated, with her duties and her studies; and so desirous had she become of profiting by this period of leisure. But mother, and David, and godfather, and all, longed to see Mary Anne; and at the close of the next term, she came back to us for *good*; and, what all the women called, "vastly improved." Really, she was a very charming young creature. Nothing, at least, could be prettier than her little hands, her pretty feet, her delicate shape, her clear and varying complexion, the ivory ears displayed by the womanly style in which she now arranged the splendid hair that formerly wont to hang curling on her neck. She had read little in this year, and yet had *improved herself*. She had worked caps and lappets for her mother, and a green purse for myself; and the letters addressed to "Dear Papa," especially such as contained a request for any thing, were now penned with studied neatness.

I was apprehensive that she might feel disgusted, and become discontented or peevish in her old quarters, after enjoying the *air*, the comparative elegance, and the refinements of her school. My alarm was vain. Sweet flexibility of woman's nature! Mary Anne, without effort, accommodated herself to her old way of life. Her quiet and gentle demeanour even imposed restraint on her mother's violence; she was allowed to regulate her own hours and occupations, and acknowledged to be *industrious*, though still chargeable with the old fault of "moping."

I knew not whether to regret or rejoice at the total silence she maintained on the subject of Mr. Lyndsay Boyle, who had left the house a very few weeks after herself, and had, as I understood, been going to the devil in very good style ever since.

This young man had received his education at Trinity College, Dublin, and his friends had intended him for the bar; but the family finances failing, he had entered the employment of one of the many flash Wine and Spirit Companies, which in London spring up like mushrooms; and had become the confidential clerk. In this capacity, Mr. L. Boyle was probably about as foolish and extravagant as are nine-tenths of his contemporaries. His salary was large, with some per centage on the sales of the house, on which last he calculated like an Irishman of twenty-three.

Among his first follies, was leaving Mrs. Moir's frugal and respectable lodgings in our lane, though for this he pleaded hatred of his landlady. There must have been some natural antipathy between Mrs. Moir and Hibernians, as I never knew one of the nation who could endure her.

But if all were silent, some of us had not forgotten Mr. Lyndsay Boyle. There are few persons in London who can altogether escape being hooked into the purchase of benefit tickets. My brother James was one of those good-natured souls, who once or twice a-year had a quantity of these commodities thrust upon him by the satellites of the great Stars. Had they been taken from players really needing this sort of largesse, one would less have minded; but, as it was, I occasionally accepted of one or two from him, and at this time did so, for the sake of my goddaughter, who, though bred in the heart of London, had not been three times in her life in any theatre. This, I have reason to believe, is the case with the daughters of many of the respectable small tradesmen and shopkeepers, especially among the numerous dissenters; and though the theatre is a school of *morals* and *manners*, I see little to regret in well-brought up young women missing many of its sights, and some of its lessons.

But we were this night Covent-Garden bound; and in good spirits we glanced over the English ballad opera that was to furnish our night's entertainment; and both to keep our custom for our friends at home, a fundamental principle of British commerce, and to purchase reasonably, David came out and bought us oranges from Mrs. Plunkett; who blessed *us* both, and swore she had never seen *us* look rosier or *purtier* than that same night; and wished to the blessed saints that Mr. Lyndsay Boyle could only see us.

We went on — one of us laughing, neither of us the merrier.

"And by the way, Mary Anne, I saw that same

Old true love of thine,

in the Park this same day, gallantly mounted, but a whole league too far off from Blackwall, or wherever he ought to be."

There was no reply: a little shiver followed,—but this was rather a cold night.

It was a well-filled, not a crowded house that we entered. We got good places, however; and amused ourselves by examining the company. There is, I confess, some perverseness in human nature which does occasionally make one feel more cheerful, social, and kindly in a play-house than in a church. Mary Anne now prattled even gaily, certainly freely and carelessly; but this was not long. If *he* did not see *her*, she saw *him*. It was one of those exhibitions which, even to indifferent parties, do not recommend the arrangements of English theatres. The cause of the involuntary clutch made by my companion at my arm, while she pressed herself against my side, as if she would have grown to me for protection from blasting images of horror and impurity, my own eyes following her glance soon detected. Yet there was almost nothing the indifferent would have remarked as extraordinary; for what more common than groups of gay young men talking with *gay* women in a theatre.

I was in pain for Mary Anne, though not particularly sorry that her own eyes had been her monitors; for how deep-seated, how powerful, must have been those feelings that, after a lapse of nearly two years, produced this terrible revulsion, this marble hue and universal shuddering,—and time it was they were extirpated. I do not suppose that Mary Anne, spell-bound, trusted herself with another look in the direction that had tortured her. When I looked again, after the space of a few minutes, Mr. Lyndsay Boyle had left his fair friends, certainly without having recognised his old acquaintances.

Once or twice I offered to take her home. "No, no—mamma would wonder." But we ultimately came away before the afterpiece, both of us, I believe, tired and sick of the theatre. Several times, on her homeward walk, Mary Anne tried to speak, and failed. We were almost under the lamp at the head of our lane, when she whispered tremulously,—

"My godfather, I wish to tell you something,"—It was the very endearing, simple phrase of her childish days of unlimited confidence,—"something it would do me good to tell you, and then I should be well again." She was now dreadfully agitated.

"My love, Mary Anne, you shall tell me what you please.—Shall I take you home, or to Nurse Wilks' first?—to my own apartments—"

"Oh, no, no—I cannot to-night bear lights and houses.—The dark—the stars—this cold free air, which keeps me from choking—"

I permitted her to lead me on; and, by choice, or more likely accident, Blackfriars Bridge, at this hour solitary enough, became our confessional. Her head leaning on my shoulder, her lips close to my ear, she several times, as we stood, repeated, as if trying to

commence her broken story, the words—"Once—I once imagined—I was a very young—a very foolish girl—almost a child, you remember,—who could fancy children having such dreams!—to last so very long: —I imagined"——There was another suffocating pause—a kind of hysterical swelling in her throat—and passionately turning away, she exclaimed aloud—"O, I cannot tell it!"

So far as regarded so penetrating an old gentleman as myself, the confidence was indeed quite superfluous. But this was no jesting matter to my poor Mary Anne, nor yet to me at that moment. I allowed her to sob herself to composure; and she took up the tale aloud, which she appeared to have been pursuing in her mind, and as if I had heard the first part. "One day that I walked with *him*, thinking every moment that you would meet me, he spoke of my mother—light, scoffing, rude words. Perhaps he forgot she was my mother; but it was cruel. I felt no one could love me *right*, and speak so of my poor mother. I loved his mother:—and every soul in Ireland he ever told me of, —how I loved them all! That was our last quarrel, and it is nearly two years since. But I never told him why I was offended; for if he had loved me *right*, he would have known that. I waited these two years. And to-night!—to-night!"

The low, quivering voice of anguish in which these words were thrilled, told me that whatever might be her fate otherwise, there was for Mary Anne slender chance of ever in this world being loved as she could love,—of being, as she childishly phrased it, "loved *right*,"—with the purity, the pride, the tenderness, the delicacy, the annihilation of self, the boundless devotion, which made up her notion, or rather her *feeling* of the blissful condition she conceived, but could not describe.

In silence I brought her home. She ran up stairs, for a few minutes, probably to bathe her eyes, and then descended to us with that air of composure, that sweet sternness, which women borrow I know not whence.

The spring and the summer passed, and I heard no more about Lyndsay Boyle, save vague rumours of his folly and extravagance. Nor could I complain of my goddaughter. She was attentive to all her duties; helpful to her mother; cheerful and obliging with her few young companions; and, so far as I could see, contented and serene in her own mind. During this interval, she spent a good deal of her time in the family of my brother, where, twice a-week, she had an opportunity of sharing in the many lessons which my two elder nieces were receiving, with a view to her becoming, during the winter, the governess of their little sisters. Though David was rather dissatisfied, Mrs. Moir, Mary Anne, and myself, highly approved this arrangement. Still, my good friend, Mrs. Moir, would occasionally complain of her daughter "moping" and "drooping." She had no young confidantes; no constant correspondent; and a disinclination to spend money on herself, or, in her mother's phrase, "to make herself smart," which, in a girl of eighteen, was, at least, very uncommon. Once, and but once, I ventured afar off to sound the state of her feelings. It was in the month of September of the same year in which we had been at Covent Garden. Instead of eluding, she invited the subject; but not its protracted discussion. I was even surprised by the firmness and air of serenity —the farthest in the world, however, from indifference—with which she said, "If he is happy, I am content."

"With no desire that he should return to his allegiance?"

"None whatever. *Peace*, I have learned, is too dear a good to be perilled, even for that which we call happiness."

"Then hail *la douce indifférence!*" was my light response.

Mary Anne sighed, faintly smiled, and resumed her work. She had not reached the point I desired. She could be calmly firm, proudly content, but not yet coldly or serenely indifferent.

I was about this time in the habit of reading a newspaper, and spending an idle evening hour, once or twice a-week, with an old Bluecoat school-fellow, in a little shop which his wife kept for the sale of small wares and perfumery, near the corner of —— Street.

After waiting in vain for clerical preferment, writing for newspapers and periodicals, lecturing on chemistry, trying a boarding-school in the Isle of Man, a circulating library in Liverpool, and various other occupations, G—— had returned to London, and at last consented to let his wife do battle, single-handed, with the world, for what might maintain her philosopher, their three children and tidy Manx maid, while he seriously applied himself once more to his often-laid-aside, but never abandoned translation of

Lucretius; and in that absorbing task forgot, for the time, all his disappointments and privations. I would have rejoiced in this oblivion of worldly cares, had he not also appeared to forget his wife's "meaner toils," and to overlook the probability of the children of a very learned man growing up without any education at all, save what comes by accident and casual association.

It was by a gracious humility that, towards six o'clock in an evening, when customers began to grow slack, G——, after a long morning of study, locked up Lucretius, assumed his wife's place, and allowed the poor woman to change, for an hour, the scene of her labours, from the back of her little counter to the centre of her young family, and to snatch her tea-dinner. On the evenings I was expected, Lucretius generally visited the crib, named the back-shop, for the benefit of my critical remarks, and the hope, nightly growing fainter, of my praise of the undertaking which, besides bringing fame, might yet woo back fortune. At times I could have pitched the translated poet on the back of the few cinders which G——'s true-hearted, cheerful wife, swept together before going away, to make the compartment *comfortable* for her scholar, and his old friend.

Theirs had been a *love-match*, I found; though in intellectual qualities and accomplishments there could hardly be two persons born in the same country more opposite. She was a neat, compact, little person; a *first-hand*, I believe, as a milliner,—all action, and with no more thought than guided her immediate finger-work: he, a man of great and various learning, a metaphysical, dreaming genius; and one of those men whom the worldly *justly* term indolent, — though more ideas of a certain kind passed through his mind in an hour than would have occupied the worldling for a month, — I mean in number; in quality and value no comparison could be made.

But while G——'s thoughts were "wandering through eternity," or lost in Chaos and Atoms, his large lumbering person was, at certain hours, to be found in the narrow region of space I have indicated. I am sure he sincerely loved his wife and their children; and, as he was a man of sound moral feeling, he as certainly regretted that Chance or Education had denied him the power of doing better for them, after his wife's little fortune had been thrown away on the boarding-school speculation, — the original project by which prudence appeared to sanction marriage.

I could, however, never bring G—— to disparage the classics nor his education; nor yet to believe that Mrs. G—— merited better to be called a heroic mother and wife, than either Cornelia, or Agrippina the wife of Germanicus. At such times he would raise his great and rather dull eyes upon me, as if questioning my sanity or my seriousness; but when I proceeded, "The most truly heroic mother I ever had the happiness of knowing, is, after all, Peg Plunkett, the orange-woman, whose barrow stands at the head of our lane," he could no longer doubt that I was speaking in the boyish vein which had formerly led me to mistify my old school-fellows. I never was more serious in my life, however,—but let that pass for the present.

Besides the pleasure I took in G——'s conversation, I felt a strong interest in the prosperity of his wife's little traffic, the more, perhaps, that my former connexions enabled me to open up a new and lucrative branch, as soon as, to speak it grandly, the general peace gave security to commercial speculations. The reputation of my sagacity in affairs, and the hazard of £20, embarked on my own responsibility, might have quickened my zeal for the disposal of her small fancy sculptures; those beautiful and delicate vases and figures in alabaster and composition, which I obtained from Florence, where they are so cheaply made and bought, and which Mrs. G——, at first, sold to very great advantage in her little shop. It was for her a prodigious stroke! — and Rothschild could not have congratulated himself more on a successfully negotiated foreign loan, than I did on the small venture which set my friend's wife fairly afloat in her business; and even introduced her to a better, that is, to a richer description of customers, for her other nick-nack wares, before the petty sculpture trade deadened. This speculation did me another service with the family, — it raised G——'s opinion of my judgment and capacity for affairs; the worthy translator having sometimes taken it upon him to affect surprise, that *I* — who had played my cards so ill, and, with a great game before me, had so abruptly thrown all up — should assume the right to lecture *him;* and over Lucretius and more favoured classics, provokingly quote against him the Scottish poet, Burns,—

> What makes fireside a happy clime
> To bairns and wife;
> That 's the true pathos and sublime
> Of human life.

G——, would not allow that Burns was a poet in any sense. A more uncandid man would, in answer to me, have impeached his life; he only disparaged his verse.

"Between lights," on a misty afternoon, late in October, with sliny, slippery streets, and the choking fetid air that creeps over and shrivels one's skin, and pierces and chills one's marrow, I had made my way to —— Street, and sat with my friend in the cabinet, boxed off from the shop, hearing him thunder out his last translated hundred and fifty verses, my eye prudently directed through a loop-hole in the green silk curtain which screened the four panes commanding the shut glass-door and the counter. Three times I had marked a figure glide past, and a female face momentarily gazing through the damp glass, and as quickly withdrawn. It is one of the miseries of London,—distrust of one's fellow creatures being to me always gnawing misery,—that the idea of a thief in such circumstances is never far distant. Whether the perfume of attar of roses and *eau de Cologne*, or the many surrounding *prettinesses*, elegancies, and appliances of female refinement, had inspired gentler and more gallant notions, I cannot tell; but it was not of a thief I thought at this time.

The door was gently and yet quickly opened, as if the person were in some haste or perturbation. The girl advanced, a slight youthful figure; and there was a little drumming summons sounded on the glass-case on the counter. I could see by the lamp-light the quick panting of the closely wrapped-up girl, and even hear her hurried, unequal breathings.

"Some waiting-maid for rouge or black-pins," said G——, peevishly laying down his MS. for the uncongenial office of supplying the customer. "These things, my wife tells me, are always neglected till the moment ladies are at their evening toilet." With a few more peevish expressions, by way of indemnifying his classic dignity, for the degradation of his secular office, G—— carefully shut the door upon me, to spare at least one of us the humiliation of coming in contact with black-pins, though both knew that bread was scarcely to be made by *black letter*, nor yet by the *black art* itself.

The girl supported herself leaning on the glass case, her features concealed by a faded green gauze veil, which hung lank and wet about her. Could it be?—It was Mary Anne—and why this mystery?

"Your pleasure, ma'am?" said G—— formally to his silent customer. "At this hour Mrs. G—— is generally out of the shop; and I fear you will find me but an indifferent substitute. Will you be seated, ma'am—I shall do my best."

"O quite, quite well, you will do, sir—for I hope you will buy my—*my hair*."

Low, rapid, and quivering as the voice was in which these few words were rather breathed than articulated, I could not be deceived in its tones. This was indeed Mary Anne. I apprehended in an instant something very near the truth.

Hastily pushing the shop-door close with one hand, as if seeking concealment, with the other the girl slipped off her bonnet and a close-eared cap, and tossing her head with an air customary to her, let down, as if tempting her chapman with the beauty of her fully-displayed wares, the redundant flood of her shining tresses. Then looking up in his face with an anxious imploring agony of expression, she whispered again more earnestly, "I do hope, sir, you will buy *this* hair." She passed her right arm under it, lifting it up again, as if to show all its brightness and length, but without another word.

G—— must have been struck and embarrassed by the appearance and manner of the dealer. After some little hesitation he replied, "We do, ma'am—that is, Mrs. G—— does buy hair. Yours is very beautiful, certainly: of that classic tinge, ma'am, which Tacitus,—that is, I mean, of a colour now very rare—the hue between golden and auburn, which the Roman beauties—ahem!"—This was probably intended for the back-shop,—for Dionysius's Ear. "I mean, ma'am——" But what cared I for listening to G——'s meanings?

What a contrast did those bright, sunny tresses make with the pale, passion-struck—the almost haggard countenance of the wretched girl, whose starting eyes were straining after the reply that was impending over her like a judge's sentence on a criminal. What was the real matter? What could have happened to have sent Mary Anne abroad on such a night? But the weather was nothing:—it was, why on such an errand—for what reason thus concealed—for what secret, for what *guilty* purpose could Mary Anne covet money obtained so strangely? My thoughts were in tumult and insurrection. I could only hastily resolve to watch, that I might aid or save her.

This was a purchase too important to be made by my friend without the knowledge

of his wife. It was an affair of importance as a business speculation; for he knew she had an order at this time for female hair of this very peculiar colour, to adorn the intriguing head of a prodigiously great lady belonging to the North of Europe. Indeed, I believe I had gossipped about this very commission in the hearing of Mary Anne.

Was it the influence of the classics, or his naturally trustful and urbane temper that made G—— think as little of thieves as myself, when, scholarly and courteously placing a chair, he begged the agitated girl to be seated, while he went round the corner to summon his wife? At this proposal she caught at once, and appeared to breathe more freely.

"Then you think it probable, sir, that she will buy?"

"I do think it *very* probable, if you can come to terms." G—— had not learned to disparage what he purchased—he was, indeed, a wretched shopkeeper.—"But you must naturally expect a great deal for your beautiful hair——"

"O, no, no!—not a great deal:—any thing;—but I want a great deal too—a very great deal of money, this *very* hour!"

The agitation of her manner must have been remarked even by G——, though not naturally the quickest of men. For my own part, I knew not how to act. Was her mind shaken by this unknown distress? I never had more difficulty in my life than to command myself during the few minutes that G—— was absent; and when Mary Anne, left alone, abandoning herself to a burst of passion, leaned down her head on her crossed arms, while she sobbed in her agony, with those frightful choked sobs, which are to me more excruciating than the most outrageous expression of woman's grief. Amidst her sobbing a name was unconsciously breathed which gave me the clew to one, perhaps to the leading, cause of her distress, while every circumstance connected with it remained more mysterious than before.

Is it habit, or nature, or mere mobility of temperament, that gives women that remarkable power I have so often noticed, of at once suppressing every violent external symptom of the passions by which they are strongly agitated? The mere mechanical effect of G—— or his wife touching the handle of the door, acted on Mary Anne's senses, and instantly restored at least the outward semblance of composure. She did not, however, speak again; but by a little gesture signified assent to what was said, and bended her head while Mrs. G—— examined, with an approving eye, the offered merchandise.

If I have been too severe on the poets, I wish to give fair play to their influences.

"Would it not be a pity, ma'am," said the scholar. His wife shook her head in admonition. "Then, Mrs. G——, you must give the young lady a handsome price for this hair.—You have an order, you know, from——"

Mrs. G—— was really angry now. So simple a man! Was it not enough, as she afterwards told me, that he could not earn a penny himself for his family, but he must spoil her trade!

"The utmost farthing she could afford was three guineas;" and with complying gestures, on the part of Mary Anne, and abundant speech from my friend's wife, the bargain was concluded; and the tradeswoman having thus secured her advantage, the *woman* came into play in her more natural character, which was kind and cheerful. It seemed a great relief to the poor girl that Mrs. G—— proposed doing the office of the *friseur*-herself. She brought the girl within her counter, drew her little screens, and dexterously plying her scissors, to which her tongue kept a running accompaniment, added tress by tress to the golden sheaf that hung glittering over her table.

What all this while were the feelings of Mary Anne? Her back was turned to me. She sat as still, and apparently as unconscious, as a sculptured figure, till the business was nearly ended.

The cutting off the hair of the Novice immediately before she takes the last solemn vows, which separate her for ever from the world, is often represented as a very affecting ceremony. The resignation of the beautiful and graceful ornament of the youthful vestal, the Bride of Heaven, is imagined a great and touching sacrifice; and the hair is consecrated by the weeping friends, among whom it is divided and treasured, as the last relic of the living-dead. There was no one to mourn over Mary Anne's severed locks—not even myself. I thought of her *heart*, not her *head*,—or at least not of its spoils; and a truss of straw, a rush-cap, would at the moment have been as important to the poor girl herself. To say she cared not for her loss was nothing. I am convinced that she never once thought of it. When the business was nearly ended, she drew from a silk bag a little seal formed of a Cairngorum pebble, on

which the national thistle and a Scottish motto were cut; and a few strings of coral beads. I knew both well. One was the highly valued gift of her honest father; the other a present from my sister Anne, made long since to my goddaughter.

"Pray, ma'am, what might these be worth?" Mrs. G—— stopped her nimble scissors, and with a brief malediction on pawnbrokers, replied, "Somewhere from ten to twelve shillings, perhaps."

"But to sell them out at once?"

"Not much more, I fear;—they are horrid Jews those pawnbrokers." With a low sigh the trinkets were returned to their keeping-place.

My friend's wife, though a sharp tradeswoman, had known adversity in its best uses. She began, I imagine, to feel some touch of remorse, under the conviction that she was certainly making a very good bargain in her rare purchase. From what I afterwards learned, there was the more prevailing idea, with a woman of her good heart, of a poor girl parting with the natural ornament a young female is supposed to cherish so fondly, and with her little trinkets, in some severe family strait; perhaps to supply the wants of little brothers and sisters, or of a father and mother. Taxes, rates;—socks and shoes for children, now October was so far on,—rent-day—that terrible day!—all these things I could learn had flashed through Mrs. G——'s mind, and many more household ideas, as her scissors cut the last locks; and kindness and prudence parleyed, and came to a compromise.

"Your hair is in such quantity that I think I must mend my offer, my dear——"

"I told you so, Mrs. G——," said G——. "This classic tinge, my love, so much prized by the Roman ladies, after the Roman arms——"

"Nonsense! Mr. G——." "—— by as much as any pawnbroker would give for your little things, if you meant to part with them."

"Thank you, ma'am."

"And if you were to call in a few days, when I see how this turns out, perhaps we might afford a little more. I shall have no scruple to ask my price; but these great ladies are so capricious;—any way, you must keep your little trinkets; and at your age your beautiful hair will soon grow again, thick and long." This was cheerfully and kindly said.

"You are very good," was the whispered reply.

Of how many shades of meaning are those few, simple words susceptible when tones become more expressive than speech. Though the face was still averted, the voice told me that now

The tears had *left* their bed.

"I have left some nice pretty curls on the temples here, my dear," said Mrs. G——, as Mary Anne rose, and as Mrs. G—— kindly tied on her cap.

A faint smile gave place to the anxious fixed look which she had fastened on G—— as she turned towards him. He was at the till, slowly counting out the money. The smile vanished far more rapidly than it gathered, as the dole, the gift, the means to some mysterious end, was eagerly grasped.

As she curtsied, her dry lips moved in a mechanical effort to return thanks. I had already taken my hat; but rapid as were my movements, and deaf as I was to the call of G——, and the exclamations of his curious wife, the fleeter steps of my goddaughter had left me considerably behind. She made several windings, wanting courage, as I believed, to enter any of the pawnbrokers' shop-doors, near which she hovered. At last, as if by a desperate effort, she entered one in Fenchurch Street; and I presume there was little difficulty in honest David's national Thistle, and my sister Anne's strings of coral, finding a destination the original donors could little have anticipated for their gifts.

It was my object to trace Mary Anne to her destination, not to accompany her; and the rapidity of her movements as she *skimmed* on, and probably the rapt state of her mind, prevented any chance of detection. She stopt at a door in a street which I do not choose to name, but, as the wits say, not above a hundred and fifty miles from the Old Bailey. It was my purpose to arrest her at this point, but before I could advance, the hall door opened to her quick knock, and was shut again; and I read on the door-plate, the familiar name of a well-known, or more properly, a notorious sharking Old Bailey attorney. I was more than ever perplexed. What could a creature like Mary Anne want with such a character?—what communion could there be between the spirit of innocence, and the presiding *genius* of the spot? That it was here the three or four pounds she had so strangely obtained were to be left, I could not doubt; for no entrance could be gained through these doors save with a golden key; though peace, hope, happiness, character, *life*, might be bartered or forfeited to find one.

Her stay, lingering as the moments seemed to me, could not have been above five minutes. Other wretches were besieging the door; and as they passed in, Mary Anne glided out, and took the straight way homewards, at a rate of speed which put me to my best pace. At the last crossing, I accosted her, as if accidentally, crying out, "Ho, Mary Anne! whither so fast?—Take me with you, or a part of my umbrella, any way." She started like a guilty thing, mumbling, "Yes, indeed, I believe it does rain." From the arm I drew within my own, I could feel that the whole frame trembled and shook as if to dissolution.

"You shiver, Mary Anne, and your hands are scorching. Are you quite well, my poor Princess? And why abroad and alone in such a night? Has mamma been scolding very bad?" I tried to laugh, as I confidentially pressed the hand, lying on my arm.

"Oh, no! Not my poor mother—'tis I am in fault—only I—if fault it be, which is deep, deadly misery. I would—I must tell you all—that I am the most wretched of all creatures this night."

She stopped: she hung her whole weight on my arm, and sobbed without restraint. I passed my arm under her cloak, and hurried her forward, to avoid the notice of the gazers on the street. Innocent, and even knightly as I was, I was too well aware of the danger of rousing the gallantry and chivalrous feelings of John Bull towards a damsel in distress, to court unnecessary observation. I intended to take her to my own apartments before I proceeded farther in cross-examination; and we were now in the lane. Fortune was unfavourable. As we approached Mr. Moir's door, his industrious lady happened to open it. She accosted me with unwonted blandness and courtesy, thanking me for having "escorted her Mary Anne home from Brunswick Square!" More mystery!—Mary Anne pressed my arm; and though I could not exactly comprehend why I should be made a party to her concealments, neither could I betray her. So I told, or what came to the self-same thing, I, by a *simper*, acquiesced in the *lie*.—I give it the plain name, as I never was casuist or hair-splitter enough to perceive essential difference between the lie spoken and the lie acted.

We were now in the neat, snug parlour; and Mrs. Moir, instead of *scolding*, or what David called *yatterin*—the Scottish language is rich in descriptive epithets—was unusually attentive to the comforts of a daughter, who, in a bad evening, had returned from spending a day with Mrs. James Taylor and her *genteel* family in Brunswick Square. Her affability extended to me; and she insisted that, as tea was just ready, I should remain. Curiosity and a better feeling were stronger prompters. I did long to fathom the depths of this day's history.

The old lady bustled away for her tea equipage, and Mary Anne then first spoke.

"You think strangely, perhaps meanly, perhaps unkindly, of me," cried the agitated girl, again clasping my arm with both her clasped hands. "Once that would have killed me:—nothing hurts me now! My cold, lumpish heart feels at times as if already dead within me.—My poor mother thinks I have spent a happy day with the kind friends *you* made my friends—Ah, no! no!"—

"And where, then, dearest Mary Anne?—my own good girl—but I will not hurry you—I"—I never could, in emotion, speak to my goddaughter without drawing her to me; without, in short, caressing her as if she were still the little affectionate child that had grown up under my eye, and almost in my arms.

"Ha! Mr. Richard," cried the tray-bearing mamma, with half-affected glee, "still flirting with my Mary Anne! I wish you were twenty years younger for her sake: I am sure you would carry her off from all the younger *beaux*.—And, bless me, my dear, how you have *mudded* your petticoat! A dozen spots at least! Fie, Mary Anne! you who are so *tidy* a walker—sure you could not have appeared in nice, sweet Mrs. James Taylor's drawing-room this morning with them spots.'

Mrs. Moir always commended good women and good puddings in precisely the same terms. They were *nice* or *sweet;* and to express the superlative both epithets were employed. This is, indeed, a female practice; nor would tracing the analogy between ladies and custards greatly puzzle a metaphysician or philologist.

I was glad of this diversion to the mud spots, for the countenance could worse have borne keen maternal scrutiny. I pleaded guilty to the splashes; but Mrs. Moir was too civil to allow so dire an imputation to rest upon me, as splashing a fair companion, though in very dirty streets. She was, in reality, more occupied with her daughter than her guest; nor could I help regretting, that with so much genuine affection and dutifulness on both sides, there should be so entire

a want of confidence and sympathy between the mother and her child.

"Go, put away your bonnet: And, bless me, what are you doing with that old green veil!—and change your shoes, my Mary Anne! Papa would say, like the Scots, 'change your feet!' Ha! ha! ha!"

The woman was crazy. I had never before seen her in this rantipole humour. "And bless me again, girl, I forgot your *boa:*—now, Mary Anne, love, where is it? Have you made a *nice* bargain? Is it ermine or *fitch*? You know what I recommended. But let us see."

Mary Anne looked to me with anxiety and confusion. Was another *lie* required?

"I thought—I forgot—it is not here, mamma."

"Left in Brunswick Square! Stupid monkey!—Well, no matter; it would have been *prudent* had you done so of purpose in such weather with a new boa. And how much got you back of my three bright sovereigns? Now let us see how you can *shop* for yourself. Eighteen almost,—hey, Mr. Taylor! and I trusted her this morning to buy a *boa* for herself, as I wished her to be *respectable* going to spend a day with excellent Mrs. James, who sees so much genteel company of a morning.—Now, how much change have you, my Mary Anne?—tell us all about it." The gracious matron smiled, as if generously expecting not a farthing, and as if not grudging her money for a *nice* smart *boa* of, as the shop-bills accurately describe it, "*London-made* fur."

I saw the poor girl was in torture. With more self-possession, she might have come off perfectly well, merely by using smiles and grimaces; but she faltered, as if bound to declare, "Indeed, mother, I have no money—not a farthing."

"Well, well, child, never expose your poverty; make yourself comfortable, and come back to make tea for your godfather and your papa."

My friend David came down stairs. While he shook my hand, I fancied that his eyes were fixed earnestly on his daughter. My merits as an escort were again recited, and David seemed relieved and satisfied on hearing, from his wife, whence I had brought Mary Anne, who now left us. We chatted of this and that, waiting her return for about twenty minutes, when the maid-servant, in answer to the mother's inquiry, reported that Miss Mary Anne had gone out!

"With her bonnet on?" cried the mother.

"Out—the lassie!" gasped David; and involuntarily, as if by a simultaneous movement, we went to the street door, following Mrs. Moir. It was impossible for Mary Anne to deny that the female from whom she hurriedly parted, under a distant door-way, was the obnoxious and redoubtable Mrs. Peg Plunkett. Evidently in great terror, the girl hurriedly approached us, panting in haste and alarm —"I forgot some reels of cotton that I required——"

"Hold your tongue, minx!" cried the mother, pushing her daughter into the house, and slamming the door after the whole party. "You will not believe me, David Moir—do you believe your own eyes?—*ocular* demonstration before your own eyes, sir—of your precious daughter? *colleaguing* with that wicked, vagabond, Irish barrow-woman, Mr. Richard!" I admired the climax. "Will I be believed now?—What want you, hussy, with that vagabond woman? What wants she with you?—To rob your mother's house, is it?" She shook the terrified girl by the shoulder.

"Hush, hush! for any sake, my dear madam, unless you wish to raise the neighbourhood," was my peace-cry. David looked from daughter to wife, and to the daughter back again, wringing his hands; and Mary Anne wept in silent anguish.

I shall not describe all the violence, in action and speech, of my good friend Mrs. Moir; who certainly might have some cause of displeasure, but nothing that could justify the preposterous lengths to which her anger went.

"But, madam, Mrs. Moir," I ventured at last to say, when the first tornado was pretty well spent, "where is the terrible harm, after all, of my goddaughter exchanging a few civil words with Mrs. Plunkett—a thing which I do once or oftener every day of my life, with great comfort and social refreshment to myself?"

"An old neighbour!" muttered David, pitching his voice to the proper tone of conjugal deprecation, and looking compassionately at the weeping girl.

"An old fiddlestick, Mr. Moir!"—How irreverent, and even impudent, some of these married women do become!—"And as to you, Mr. Richard, who are thought a rather particular gentleman, you are no rule,—gentlemen may do as they please. But that bold girl, whom I have ordered and commanded, at her peril, not to look to that woman, or speak to that woman; whom you,

Mr. Moir, if worth your ears, sir, would have had removed from this neighbourhood, long and long ago, as a nuisance, sir, there where she stands, — to laugh at your wife and ruin your child," &c. &c.

Now my friend Peg's crime was meditating housebreaking, now ruining girls! I could make little sense of this, though I was forced to perceive my goddaughter's transgression and disobedience.

"My dear Mary Anne, it is clear you must not speak to poor Peg again. Perhaps Mrs. Moir is right in thinking her not quite the best sort of even speaking acquaintance for a young woman. And you, my good madam, must be reasonable with *our* daughter. Though she is your own property, I doubt if you know half her value." Mrs. Moir, though far enough from a reasonable mother, had about her a good deal of the she-bear's fondness for her offspring; so she also began to sob and cry in her own obstreperous fashion.

"I would have Mary Anne value herself, Mr. Richard—keep her own place, sir—and show a proper pride, Mr. Richard."

"I am afraid my friend Mrs. Plunkett fancies she shows even an improper pride, ma'am. Only last week she was hinting to me of the changed face Mary Anne shows her." This was well thrown in: but Mary Anne's quick and warm candour spoiled all.

"I have not till yesterday spoken — and scarce looked to her for six months — scarce since I returned from Bognor. If she were not a generous-hearted, a high-minded woman, she would not now have forgiven, or have spoken to me."

"Grant me patience! Do you hear her, Mr. Richard? — do you hear her, Mr. Moir? —Is the girl mad?— An Irish barrow-woman, an orange-woman *condescend* to speak to my child! Girl, girl, what have you to say to that vagabond —Are you mad outright?"

"Gude help us a'," ejaculated David, driven to his mother-tongue; and he fairly ran out of the room.

Mary Anne lay weeping, her head on the table: — she quickly raised herself, and in a voice whose tones I shall never forget, breathed out, — "Mother, I am not mad — not yet mad — O, spare me then to-night, dear mother, if you would not see me so! Strange things are about me. — Spare me for this night! — I know how you love me: — and you will rue it all the days of your life if you are too hard with me to-night. I should like to go to bed now."

I could see that the mother was affected, and even alarmed. I promptly interposed, and approached Mary Anne. "Certainly, my dear, you shall go to bed — do to-night whatever you will: I answer for Mrs. Moir. — Indeed, I mistake if you are not far from being well to-night. I stooped over her where she sat, my back turned to the mother, who stood by irresolute. I held the poor girl's burning hands clasped within both mine. She leant down her head, and kissed my hands repeatedly, passionately breathing, "My own kind godfather, — *my Good Genius!*"

The tears that fell on my hands were scalding; but the fever of the mind was, I feared, yet higher than that which raged in the blood. I would have given more than I need name to have had a few minutes of confidential communing with the distracted girl. I saw that her heart, with all its load of sorrows, was in my hands. She ventured to kiss her mother, but in silence, and then left us. The good lady followed in a very few minutes; and almost immediately returned to say, "The foolish thing was already asleep!" And no doubt Mary Anne had feigned sleep.

We now had tea; and when Mrs. Moir, carrying tea with her to Mary Anne, left us to gather intelligence for a second bulletin, David assailed me with a whispered, "I beseech ye, Mr. Richard, speak to the wife to be less severe with the bit lassie! They'll break my heart between them! She sees nae peer to Mary Anne, I ken that; and yet the *yammer* for one fault or another is never out of her mouth. Of the thousand ways the women-folks have of spoiling their dochters, Mr. Richard, the worst, to my mind, is this endless *yammerin'*, and *yatterin'*, and *nag-nagging*, for little or nothing. And the worst of all is, these *teuch*-(tough) hearted auld carlins little think how their bitter scalding words blister and crush a tender young spirit. I mind myself the bursting heart I used to have, even when *man-muckle*, when, if I had slept an hour ower lang in a morning, or let the young beasts I was herding get a rug o' the green corn, a thrawn auld sorrow o' a bachelor uncle I had would have prophesied the ill end such sinful beginnings would come to; and that less than the gallows, the end just made by one Rob Gunn, hanged at Aberdeen for horse-stealing, would not atone for backslidings like mine. These are cruel, senseless sayings, Mr. Richard! and they are worse than foolish that drive young creatures

to judge ower hardly o' themselves, and lose self-respect, for mere nonsense. There was ne'er ony thing lost by showing kindness to a kindly nature. — I wish our minister would preach about that."

In honest David's strictures on moral discipline, so far as I understood them, I fully concurred. Mary Anne was reported still quiet, and asleep. I was, at least, aware that she wished to seem so, to avoid all conversation for this night.

From my own window I saw her chamber was dark by midnight; and I went to bed, ruminating on the events of the evening, and more perplexed than ever. It was idle to torment myself. I was convinced that she wished to give me her confidence, and with it the power of aiding and counselling her; and I subdued my anxiety and curiosity, resolving to visit her chamber next morning, — a liberty which I had always enjoyed, in common with her father, when she was really sick.

I was taking my morning coffee, in the straggling light of a gray, damp day-break, when Mrs. Moir's maid-servant brought the hasty tidings, that "Master had gone early to the Bank, *Missis* was in *hicksterics*, and Miss Mary Anne was run away."

I lost no time in going to "Missis." The slight natural antipathy which existed between us, and all the petty tiffs and resentments of eighteen years, gave way before the extreme distress of my neighbour; violent and undignified in expression, but deep and real in suffering. She accused her husband, she upbraided myself, she railed at the Irishwoman, she execrated her own harshness, and blamed the whole world, save her "Dear, beautiful child—her Mary Anne—who must, she was certain, have thrown herself over Blackfriars Bridge, for fear of being scolded for the loss of her *boa*: — there could be no doubt of it."

The only thing in which the unhappy woman showed reason, was, that I should lose no time in setting out in my search, and in being persuaded to put off her pattens, remain where she was, and keep herself and her clamorous maid within doors; leaving me, instead of the constable, to deal with Mrs. Plunkett. I left her rather more composed by my assurance, that the catastrophe she dreaded was utterly impossible, and my promise of not returning without tidings of Mary Anne.

This interview occupied a very few minutes. My first hope was Mrs. Plunkett, who was already on duty at her station, talking to herself, rubbing gently, and piling her oranges and lollypops. She accosted me in her ordinary way, with the genial, heart-reaching courtesy of an Irish greeting.

"Morrow! Mr. Richard, sir, — and a raw one it is to them poor boys were hung that same. I see where you been down the lane. The Misthress is among her troubles, this misty morning, it seems: — well, sorrow bit of myself heeds that same, if no harm come to the good, purty girl. Och, devil a care for the ould one, Mr. Richard, sir." She laughed good-humouredly.

Though Peg was a generous woman, her generosity was of the national complexion. It was rarely displayed in magnanimity towards an enemy, or even to a fallen foe.

"She'd be glad to have the little girl at home to-day, even to spaike to the Irish barry-woman," added Peg.

All my address could extract little information from so stanch an ally and auxiliary as Mrs. Plunkett, who hated her insolent English neighbour with a hatred of twenty years' standing; and who, besides, reckoned herself of the daughter's *faction*, and therefore opposed to the mother. Any sacrifice would have seemed slight, compared to the dishonour of betraying Mary Anne, or to the baseness of treachery.

"I'll tell ye nothing, Mr. Richard; what should I know of the little girl? — I seen where ye come from, sir, down the lane. What should I tell ye of the poor girl?"

I could not disabuse the woman of the belief, that to tell of Mary Anne's doings to her mother was wrong and treachery. I had lost my time and my eloquence. I became angry at last, and was so far left to my own folly and ignorance, or forgetfulness of Irish nature, as to threaten a magistrate, — that insolent threat, always too familiar to London lips. All her Hibernian blood was in a rage. I wish some of our cold, stiff, tragedy heroines had seen Peg as she drew herself up and exclaimed —

"And ye would—would ye?—ye would—to the widow stranger woman, who sought honest bread under the shadow of your roof for seven years, for the bed-rid mother, and the fatherless little ones?——Och, no, Mr. Richard, and that ye would not: — and, excuse my passion—but ye should not have said that same, sir."—I was, indeed, heartily ashamed of having said "that same."

"But for a hasty word, ill would it become me to forget what ye done for me and mine:"

—I had attended the family with my best medical skill in typhus fever, though I fear they had little faith in me—"Or showed the will to do, any way, which is the same—and what *she* done!"—And the grateful woman kissed the little ebony cross, with which I had presented her on the death of our common friend, Sister Agathé, whom she regarded as a Saint, and, for ought I knew, on holidays invoked as one. "And if it be, sir, that it is as you say, for the little girl's own good, that I should tell you all I know, then I will, if you swear on the Book, not to acquaint the mother.—By the same token, I had a notion that I ought to tell you, and had a drame about that same this last night too." Here a female friend and countrywoman was called from a neighbouring cellar.

"Morrow! Mrs. Tuomy. ——— She is a true creature, Mr Richard,—I would trust her with a barry of gould,—that Mrs. Tuomy. Will ye just give a luke to the barry, ma'am, whilst I run up to the place with the doctor, to see the ould lady, poor ould baiste,—and sure I'd do more for yourself again."

"With all the veins, Mrs. Plunkett, ma'am, and compliments to the ould lady this same morning." And, these civilities exchanged, I followed Peg's stoutest campaigning stride to the garret, where her bed-rid ancient mother, so affectionately named "the poor ould baiste," had lain for many years.

"Welcome to the place, sir, and to the seat in it! She'll be glad to see ye, dear ould baiste. Moder dear, this is the doctor!" Peg bawled.—But I have no time for this scene, which Peg had tact enough to perceive I was impatient of. She took, from a small brown, broken tea-pot, or pipkin of some kind,—part of the apparatus used in her lollypop manufacture, I believe,—a number of letters or papers, blotted and tear-stained scrawls, but all in the well-known handwriting of my poor Mary Anne. There may be persons who would have thought it dishonourable to read these writings. I had no scruples or admonitions of conscience. I loved the writer well,—and my heart gave my eyes free warrant.

"And you were the messenger in this affair?"

"To Newgate prison, sir?—then, in troth, I was. I don't deny it, Mr. Richard. Could I refuse the poor cratur, who, the thin white face tould me, was on her knees to me, as for the bare life to go? In troth, then, I could not."

"I do not blame you; but tell me, and quickly, what passed." I looked to the papers again. They were—blotted, confused, interlined, as they appeared—the history of a criminal case—materials for a brief, in short—full of pathetic pleading, heart-inspired eloquence, and, what was more surprising, acute reasoning on facts and minute circumstances of evidence, though the writer was only my poor Mary Anne, and this, beyond all doubt, her first law-paper.

"Go on, Mrs. Plunkett! I am all impatience."

"Then, first, the poor girl swore me on the Book, or, all as one, tuke my word and honour, as an Irishwoman, never to tell who sent me there; for, somehow, she saw in the papers, that Mr. Lyndsay Boyle, who is a gentleman born, was put up by them dirty scamps, for some thrifle of money 'bezzled."

I held the blotted brief; so I knew the whole history, and I was impatient on other points. Mr. Lyndsay Boyle's habits of thoughtless extravagance had led him into difficulties. He had exhausted the funds, and offended the feelings of his relations. He had also quarrelled with his rascally employers, the flash Wine and Spirit Company. He was in possession of their dishonest secrets of trade, which he had detected, and they were resolved to ruin him, and send him out of the country. It was an unhappy affair, and, very probably, a case of infamous conspiracy. But how came my unfortunate goddaughter to be involved in it?

"No more than the babe to be born tomorrow knew the poor cratur, Mr. Richard, though the boy was once, in a way, her bachelor; but was she to see him hung?"

"Hung!—not so bad as that neither. It is only transportation—a case under Sir Thomas Plomer's act,—that merciful and equitable law, Mrs. Plunkett, by which the pinched embezzler of 5s. is more liable to punishment, ruin to himself, and all connected with him, in fame, fortune, and happiness, than the embezzler of £50,000; as the latter has a thousand better chances of eluding justice in the first instance, or of baffling it in the end. The sum for which this foolish young fellow is committed seems £4, 10s."

"Just that, sir—Mr. Tim Byrne, a countryman, a Treda* man I met in Newgate, tould me all about it; for the young gentleman himself is, they say, mad entirely

* Drogheda, I believe, is meant.

with the grief and affront—and indeed he looked like it.—The shame of the world on them! to harm so handsome a boy, and to break the heart of the poor girleen for such a thrifle."

Mrs. Plunkett would look neither to statute nor common law, nor offence to justice. She stuck to "ruining a boy for £4, 10s."—I had difficulty in keeping her to her text, on which she discoursed something at large.

"Och, little could I make of him, though I was as cunning as the Ould One not to mention the girleen. He looked mighty high, and hardened, and proud at first; and whistled, and tramped about the yard as long as I stood, and made a laughing too.—'And how is your neighbour, old David Moir, and his pretty daughter?' says he. 'All very well, but will be sorry to the heart for you, sir,' says I. 'Oh, tell Miss Mary Anne not to concern herself about me;'—and with that the whistle began again; and then he shouted 'DAMNATION!' and round on his heel, and away from me, for we were in the yard. And with that comes my countryman, Tim Byrne, who makes his bit of brade, poor sowl, writing of letters for the prisoners, and the like. 'He is a fine young man, Mrs. Plunkett, ma'am,' says he; "and if you care for him or his, you must get an attorney, ma'am, and a counsel, and a brief drawn, and no time to lose; and five pounds at the very laste.' And with that I came home to Miss Mary Anne, waiting me here, poor dear!

"'Not concern myself?' cried the poor cratur. Had you but seen her, Mr. Richard! 'Och! how can he imagine his friends could help that!' cried she. Troth, had I born her, I could not be more sorry for the young cratur; and he was a gay, frank boy, too. Miss Mary Anne durst not tell the mother or the father; and five pounds were to us the Bank of Ireland—to her and myself, I mean; for if I had it, Mr. Richard—"

"Well, what did you?"

"Och! one or other of us,—I believe it was herself,—thinks, 'Sure Tim Byrne could help us something.' So back I goes, just as they were locking up, and Tim going home for the night; and I *traited* him myself on the way back, not to be bringing gin to the place, and poor Miss Mary Anne, who is a genteel cratur, waiting in it—Mr. Lyndsay Boyle's *sister*, as I called her to Tim:—no occasion for that vagabone knowing every thing. So he tould her the whole story; and all night long she sat up in her own place, and wrote them scribbles, myself buying candles for her, to chate the ould one; and yesterday morning early, I took the clean copy—the brief it is—to Mr. ——, with two gould sovereigns; and the cruel baiste, putting that in his pocket, would not look to me. 'More money!' says he, 'I can offer no counsel this long brief with a paltry two sovereigns;' and back I came to the poor girl, who looked like one distracted. The Sessions going hot on—no attorney, no counsel, no witness, and no money to procure them. Tim frightened the poor girleen out of her little wits; and indeed, and in troth, I fear he is a bit of a rogue, Tim. 'Could not you get something on them ear-rings, ma'am,' says he; and out came the bits of ear-rings—down in his hand—and away she fled, and I saw her no more."

"And where is Mary Anne now, at this moment?" was my impatient cry.

"And indeed, and in troth, the Pace knows, Mr. Richard! Only this morning, the cratur that slaves for the ould woman her mother, tould me the pretty bird had flown; and where she is gone was the very thing I meant, sir, to ax yourself: and if I were in your place, sir, I would have the young things married out of hand, and let them comfort one another."

I was already half way down the crazy stair. "How could you, woman, delay me in this way?"

"Then, indeed, Mr. Richard, darling——"

"Go to the——! I mean go to your barrow, Peg; and if you see Mary Anne returning, bring her here to wait me."

"Then I will, jewel;—and why would the ould lady cross her? She took her own way—why cross the poor girl, if it's that young man she fancies?"

"Hush, hush!"

Newgate prison was my aim; but influenced by Peg's information, as this was in the heat of the Sessions, I went first to the Old Bailey—that wholesale mart of English criminal justice, where till the other day life, character, happiness, peace of mind, were, from six to ten times in one hour, going! agoing! gone!

Who that has once seen the general aspect, and watched the proceedings of that yawning mouth of Avernus can ever forget it? Why have we not moral as well as historical painters? Hogarth has left us some striking lessons, and Cruikshanks has done something:—the Old Bailey alone, every day of the

Sessions, might have furnished numbers without number. It was about ten o'clock when I entered the Court. Before eleven I had seen at least six cases tried, and as many juvenile thieves found guilty, and left ready, at a future day, to be sentenced in the lump. I mean, in one day, or rather one hour, to be condemned by the score to the hulks, transportation, whipping, or imprisonment. There was complete division of labour here. I endeavoured to ascertain what cases stood next to come on. No one could tell. Probably no one there distinctly new. It seemed all matter of accident or caprice; and all was crowd, hurry, buzz, bustle, and confusion. I was at a loss whether to remain where I was, or at once repair to Newgate, when my resolution was fixed by the mumbled call for a prisoner, whose name, at least to my fancy, resembled "Lyndsay Boyle;" and the young man himself was brought forward, escorted in the usual manner,—changed, indeed, from what I had seen him some months before. I could not look upon the poor youth without deepinterest and compassion. His case appeared to excite considerable curiosity. The court became crowded and choked up by all kinds of people. I was pushed back, and, from the noise, confusion, and hubbub on every side, it was impossible, from the place where I stood at last jammed in, to hear one word distinctly of the trial proceeding before me in dumb show. I looked on the unfortunate culprit, and the pantomime of justice performing before me, with a swell of indignant feeling which I shall not describe. The attorney, with whom I knew poor Mary Anne had left her hard-earned money, was visible in the crowd, but distant from the bewildered prisoner, gesticulating violently, as if calling, or pretending to call, to the officers of the court to get forward his witnesses—searching, or pretending to search, for the counsel who held the brief, and who could not be found. The Bench *naturally* grumbled. I was afterwards told that very unusual patience and indulgence had been shown to the prisoner. It was indeed fourteen minutes by my watch from the time he was placed at the bar till the thrilling shriek of a female voice followed the awful *guilty;* and in the gallery, to which I now first looked, I saw a green gauze veil falling with the sinking head. The shriek of woman's agony was in those days not so rare in that Court as to produce any very marked sensation.

"*Remove the woman!*" was but a customary official mandate. I pressed forward to take my goddaughter from the officers who hastened to conduct, or carry her out.

"He is sold—the poor fellow is sold!" were the indignant whispers and exclamations of the respectable persons around me, in whom free notions of the rights of property, and the habit of thieving, had by no means obliterated all sense of natural justice, whatever the virtuous may think. Their sympathy with Boyle was lively and intense. Many of the poor wretches had probably passed through the same ordeal, or were liable to it. As I pushed through the crowd, I came upon the attorney, who had been apparently in hot pursuit of the counsel, now first found.

"Bless my soul!" cried the attorney, "but this is really unlucky."—Has that man a soul by which to bless himself?

"Ha! the case closed," replied the counsel, wheeling round; and, flirting his bundled briefs, involving the fortunes of probably some other half dozen wretches, he scampered off to another Court.

"And is my evidence to be wholly useless?—not to be heard, sir?" said a decent-looking young tradesman, who now found the attorney that had been in search of him. "I have waited here every day this week, and this is Thursday, to give evidence, which I am morally certain would have cleared Mr. Lyndsay Boyle."

"We must now see what can be done through the Pardon Power," said the attorney. "If he has friends, there is no fear of him yet."

"But if he have none?" said the witness.

The attorney shrugged his shoulders. "I have a dozen cases here to-day—good bye, sir—write to his friends, if you wish him well, to move the Pardon Power—even that takes cash:—make way for the lady—fainted, poor thing!"

I claimed the unfortunate girl from the men who almost carried her. At the sound of my voice she revived. She flew to me, clasped me, clung to me, and then lay insensible in my arms, till the coach, into which some of the humane bystanders had assisted me to lift her, stopped at my brother's door.

"Then," she first murmured, "*You* saw it all?"

"I did."

"Just God! who judgest! and was that a just trial? I never before witnessed one. It had ended before I knew it was begun. GUILTY! O, what will become of him? And they say he is half-mad already. If the King were to know this, he would pity him; and indeed, indeed, he is not guilty."

I could not deprive the poor girl of the hope that was the growth of her despair. "Indeed, I don't believe him guilty, Mary Anne; at least I am certain the punishment is most unequal—far exceeds the crime."

"You don't! you don't!" she cried, her eyes flashing over me with a wild joy; and she covered my hands with her burning kisses.

"You must be still, my dear Mary Anne. You are grieving me and destroying yourself; you must be composed and trust to me."

"To you! O, yes! to *you*, my best, my only, my true friend, MY GOOD GENIUS!"

"I have brought you to my brother's for a few hours. The family are out of town to-day: you must go to bed and be well, and in the evening your mother will take you home; and no one shall know our affairs but ourselves." I was pleased with my own arrangement—pleased that my gentle and prudent sister was not at home, who, I had some doubts, would, with all her indulgence, have been strongly disposed to condemn the conduct of my goddaughter as a very flagrant breach of female propriety,—which no doubt it was.

I told the necessary lies to the housekeeper, who was well acquainted with my goddaughter; and the patient, "suddenly seized," was regularly put to bed, and her chamber darkened. I returned home. When Mrs. Moir heard where I had left her sick daughter, the *boa* again recurred to her as the reason of Mary Anne's early flight, which I allowed her to believe was as she imagined, induced by dread of her righteous displeasure for the loss of that piece of gear; a loss which I was aware Mr. Attorney —— had made pretty certain.

Under what influence, I am at a loss to say, but involuntarily my steps turned to Newgate. Under this same statute against *embezzlement*, I had known gross injustice and oppression practised. To city merchants, attorneys, and dealers of all kinds, embezzlement to the smallest extent appears the blackest and most atrocious of all crimes: hanging is too good for it. From Mary Anne's *brief*, or instructions to the attorney, it appeared that arrears of salary, or the per centage on sales due to the prisoner, very considerably exceeded the sum he was charged with having embezzled. That sum had been paid on a Saturday by the tradesman who stood ready to be his leading witness. He had granted a regular receipt for it; but on Tuesday it had not been paid over to his employers, and that night he was arrested. One or two gentlemen in business, with whom I talked the affair over on my way to Newgate, gave me very little hope. Fourteen years' transportation to the penal colonies was really no such great hardship to a young fellow, who might make his way there very well. The jury would not recommend him as a fit subject of the Pardon Power, assuredly; nor would a single gentleman in the city say one word in behalf of a man convicted of the dangerous and growing crime of embezzlement. The extravagance and dishonesty of clerks were getting beyond all bounds. Mr. Lyndsay Boyle attended races, probably gamed; kept a couple of horses, and, at least, one mistress. I need not say, that though the youth had been foolish enough, there was not one word of truth in these statements, as I found, when I afterwards rigidly traced his whole course of life and conversation.

But, in the mean time, I went to visit the prisoner. Our previous acquaintance had neither been very intimate nor cordial. Now he received me with coldness and hauteur enough, and talked of his own condition in what I may fairly term a style of unbecoming bravado. But by and by he lowered his tone; and on his clearly perceiving that I really had a strong impression of his innocence, and questioned the fairness of his trial, I gained him at once. He became as frank as he had been haughty; and placed so much confidence in my sympathy as, on slender solicitation, to tell me his whole story, and to all but weep in my presence, without being humiliated by the exposure of his true feelings.

The neglect of his relatives stung him the deepest. He had written and re-written home. True, there was little time; but could they not have sent,—could they not have flown! He never once alluded to Mary Anne or her family, save to say, very coldly, that he "had been weak enough—*mean* enough—to apply to David Moir for a loan of five pounds to procure legal assistance, and had received no answer." I afterwards learned that it was the furtive perusal of this letter, intercepted by her mother, which had made my goddaughter acquainted with the fate of Boyle.

We had conversed for at least two hours; and I was now really, for his own sake and that of justice, and quite independently of Mary Anne, animated by the desire of aiding the young man to clear up this unhappy transaction. When we were about to part,

and while he pressed me to return to see him the jailors, or their assistants, ushered in a party of gentlemen with an unusual bustle and ceremony, one of them evidently just off a long journey.

"My uncle!" cried the prisoner, springing forward to meet a gentleman attended by the Common Sergeant, the Chaplain of Newgate, and one of the Aldermen, who, if I remember aright, was Mr. Alderman Waithman.

"And I am too late!—Lyndsay, what dreadful disgrace is this?" The gentleman sat down without seeing, at least without accepting the hand his unfortunate nephew had held out. The young man changed colour repeatedly, and, indeed, appeared so painfully agitated, that I would have gone away to spare my own feelings, had he not silently held me.

Scenting the prey from afar, the attorney in the case followed the gentlemen into the private room we now obtained; and Boyle's uncle, who belonged to the legal profession, heard him "on the merits." He made statements, which, from Mary Anne's memorial, I took it upon myself to contradict and explain. The uncle now held out his hand to his young kinsman, who appeared astonished to learn that he really, after all, had enjoyed the benefit of legal assistance at his trial. The attorney had still to play his part; and as several functionaries were present whom it was not prudent to offend, I had the pleasure of hearing judge, jury, agent, and counsel, exonerated from all blame. Nothing had gone amiss; the trial was full and fair; every one had done his duty, and no one was in fault save "the poor young woman, the prisoner's wife or sister, who was *so* dreadfully agitated, that she had made a memorial *so* long and confused, that no counsel could read it, and was *so* late of lodging the fee, &c.—Now, there was nothing for it but the Pardon Power."

I thought Boyle's eyes would have pierced me during part of this discourse. I left him with his friends, by his uncle's direction writing to his mother, and went to my brother's to see Mary Anne.

"Are you quite alone?" said the languid girl.

"Quite alone!" There was a long pause.

"And have you any news?"

"Very good news." She started up from her pillow, looking anxiously in my face. "Well, lie down till I tell you."

"I am lying."

"Turn your eyes from the light, then.—I left Mr. Boyle with an uncle from Dublin, the Common Sergeant, the Recorder of London."

"His uncle, Mr. Lyndsay?"

"How the deuce should I *know* the lad's Irish relations?—Alderman Waithman, and a Mr. ——, a particularly rascally attorney."

"Oh!" sighed the patient.—"And now I have no doubt that a pardon will be obtained for Boyle,"—she sprang up again,—"in a few weeks, perhaps; so we need trouble our wise heads no more about him."

"Oh, no! no! no more——" sobbed my patient. "This is, indeed, all *we* could desire. He will be pardoned; and he is innocent.——But do the innocent need pardon? *He* is innocent."—

"Hush!—I hear your mother's voice."

"O, it is enough—he is pardoned." There was another pause. "And was that all?"

"All!—Mr. Boyle had the delicacy not to mention to me the name of any former friend."

"That was right," sighed my patient, becoming very pale, and sinking down on her pillow.—"Now, he can never know; no one can guess.—It would kill me should any one suspect the wild things of these last two days."

Mrs. Moir entered on tip-toe. I used a little finesse. — "Sleeping and decidedly better," was my whisper—"fever much lower—ran so high that it was thought best to cut off her hair!"

"My Mary Anne's beautiful hair! her father will be so vexed!"

"Well, but don't vex her about it—never mention her loss!"

"Certainly not—and though her father likes that Scottish *snood*, I always thought Mary Anne looked much nicer in a neat, tidy cap."

Three days after this my goddaughter walked with me for some miles, quite recovered, she said; but it took a time. In a few weeks, however, she went into my brother's family for the winter, on the condition, that from Saturday to Monday, she was to come home to our lane.

With all the inquiries, and all the influences of back-stairs and front entrances that could be exerted, it was full two months before the Pardon Power released the prisoner, acknowledged to have been unjustly condemned. By this time we were become great friends. I had seen him often. Perhaps adversity had been of service in correcting

his faults of pride and heedlessness, and something might be attributed to the removal of my original prejudices, for now I not only merely liked, but, on increased intimacy, conceived a highly favourable opinion of Mr. Lyndsay Boyle.

One of his first visits on his enlargement, was made to myself. He was about to return to Ireland with good prospects; and having a great opinion of my skill, save the mark! in *vertu*, he wished my directions in laying out some of the money his liberal uncle had supplied him with in pretty things as presents to take home—cameos, or mosaic ornaments, or trinketry of some kind or other. I took him to the shop of my friend, Mrs. G——; and his own good taste led him to select some of her fairy sculptures. While he bargained with the lady, G—— talked apart in an under voice to me:—"The great lady has returned from Brighton at last, Richard; and she is charmed with the young girl's hair.—You can't have forgot the girl who sold Mrs. G—— her hair; whom you scampered after like a madman that night in October last. Don't you remember the girl's *hair* that you said, in your own wild way, the old Greeks would have raised into a constellation, and adored by the name of Mariamne."

"Mary Anna, my love," cried glib Mrs. G——, who, though deeply engaged in her Italian merchandise, had, like all clever shopwomen, at least three pairs of eyes and ears corresponding; nor were young Boyle's deficient. As we walked along, he said, *à propos des bottes*, "By the way, how are our old friends, the Moirs? Miss Moir is not at home I believe?" "My goddaughter resides for this winter in my brother's family." He walked with me to the door of the house, and was *not* invited in. We stood on the steps. "Do you not, pardon me, Mr. Richard, think Mrs. Moir an exceedingly disagreeable, ill-tempered woman?"

"That is an odd, if not a severe remark: most ladies can be disagreeable enough when it so pleases them: exceedingly disagreeable, is a strong phrase."

"Were it not for that vulgar woman:—now, David is an honest old Trojan—I like him." It was not my business to spell out Mr. Boyle's meanings: he fished out of me that I was, that same evening, to attend my brother's children and their little governess to the pantomime. He was in the box before us with a cousin I had formerly seen; a lad just entered at Lincoln's Inn. I was first made aware of his presence by my goddaughter, who sat by me, being seized with one of her ague-fits, that universal shivering which was her strongest manifestation of feeling, when soul and body maintained the passionate struggle. Not a feature was discomposed; nor could any one, save myself, have guessed that her emotion arose from any thing save severe external cold. "O, dear, poor Miss Moir is *so* cold!" cried one of my little nieces, wrapping her fat arms round Mary Anne, as she pushed farther into a corner, and drew her shawl the closer. As the performance proceeded, keeping her eyes steadily fixed upon the stage, she talked and even smiled with the laughing children and myself, and showed so wonderfully little of affected surprise, when Mr. Lyndsay Boyle ventured to recognise her, and when she coldly bowed to him, as to baffle even me.

"I thought she had been younger, Lyndsay," was the whisper of the cousin. "She looks quite an old woman, or at least a young matron."

"She is not so very old, though; but that ugly cap,—it covers her glorious hair."

"*Glorious hair!*" returned the youth, laughing at the extravagant phrase; "Do you hear Lyndsay's description, Mr. Taylor?"

"Beautiful hair *she had*," was my response.

"And why has not now?"

"Because she cut it off in a brain fever, one night in October last," was my whisper—a sally repented as soon as made.

The young man started up suddenly, placed his handkerchief to his brow, and left the box. The cousin followed, imagining some sudden illness. I was almost provoked by the cold, demure air, which Mary Anne wore throughout the rest of the night; and was only reconciled to her, when I had, unintentionally, worked up her womanly feelings to a rage of pride, fully six months after Boyle had left London, without any attempt to see more of us. But to that paroxysm I have already alluded; nor did I ever again dare to hint at the possibility of Mary Anne having fallen in love, without due wooing, and all the proper rites of courtship.

Mr. Boyle had been franker in explanation with myself; but I was prudent this time, and thought silence, as to his sentiments, no bad auxiliary to the maidenly pride of my goddaughter, disdainful as she was become. If rash and impetuous in her love, Mary Anne was, at least, abundantly prudent in her marriage. She appeared for some years to show even that natural vocation to the

serenity of old maidenhood, which some women really have — let the men say as they will. Her mother had been dead for three years, and her father retired from the bank before the united entreaties of her friends could shake a resolution early formed against the "honoured state." She has now, however, been, for above seven years, the wife — and, I have reason to believe, the happy one — of a thriving and highly respectable distiller in the county of Antrim, and the mother of I know not how many fine children. Her father, who lives with her, is, I find, extremely useful to her husband; and happier, he writes me, than ever he was in his life before. At this very period, Mary Anne is still spoiling her third boy, Dick Taylor, who, by David's letters, is almost as great a genius and prodigy as his name-father — according to Nurse Wilks — was fifty years ago. — Specimens of his poetry have been sent me; and of his painting I possess a "chimera dire," which I am credibly informed is a horse. Mary Anne's last letter to me begins, "I am writing to my dear godfather with Dick in my lap. — Indeed every body says he is the most charming little fellow they ever saw. He insists on making these scratches for a letter to 'Grandpapa Taylor.'"

But the charm of my Mary Anne's epistles is, that though I have not seen her for seven years, each is written as if I had kissed her last night. We shall never grow out of acquaintance. My brother's family visited the Moirs last summer, on their tour to the Giant's Causeway. The most novel intelligence they brought me was this from my sister Anne: — "And gracious, Richard, could you ever believe it, — Mrs. LYNDSAY BOYLE is growing stout, and can whip her children! — Her very last words to me, with tears in her eyes, after I was in the carriage, were, 'Will my godfather *never* come!'" — Yes, before I die, I shall see *ould* Ireland and my dear Mary Anne!

GOVERNOR FOX.

BY RICHARD TAYLOR, ESQ.

THERE is one corner of a newspaper which never escapes me, — no, not in the broadest, closest double-sheet, put forth after a long debate about pensions and sinecures. During a money panic, I may chance to look first at the price of stocks, — and, pending a Westminster election, glance at the latest state of the poll; but sooner or later I am sure to return and pore over the obituary. Some of my friends say this is a symptom of age creeping on, something like an old lady buying a new "Practice of Piety," in a print a size larger than is required by her present spectacles. I only know that the obituary is to me a column which at all times teems with grave, yet not unpleasant histories. There I see my old acquaintances, slight or intimate, and long lost sight of, for the last time. We meet once again to part in peace, and for ever. No man indulges harsh or unkindly feelings in perusing the obituary. This column, with which the newspaper moralizes its motley pages, is to myself as productive of musing contemplation, as a saunter, backwards and forwards, beneath the elms of some antique and rural church-yard, in a June evening, — when the rooks above have settled for the night, when the curfew has ceased to toll, and the fantastic, flickering shadows cast by the sunken tomb-stones, are fast vanishing from the grass.

I could not exactly recollect whether it was to my young friend Walpole, with whom I sat, that I owed my original acquaintance with Captain Stephen Fox, or if I first saw him as the client of my brother James: but I well remember the circumstances which taught me to revise my hasty and unfavourable opinion of the tough old Governor. Had I known him only in his capacity of client, his death, in the obituary of a provincial paper, would scarcely have drawn from me the half-suppressed *eheu!* with which I met the likeliest piece of intelligence in the world, — that a strong-willed, hale man, of nearly fourscore, full of vitality, and resolute upon living on for another ten years, had nevertheless been compelled suddenly to submit to the common lot, all his plans unexecuted. One thing remarkable was the list of legacies appended to the notice. These were out of all keeping with the character of the bequeather; — but this might be the effect of a fit of death-bed remorse.

My young friend, who, from various circumstances, felt even more interest in the

event than myself, had thrust the newspaper into my hand, pointing to the notice,—saying, in a slightly tremulous voice—"See here! Poor, old fellow! He was, with all his queernesses, a sound-hearted man, and the friend of me and mine, when a friend was of more value to us than now."

I now perfectly recollected where I had first seen the old Governor. It was at a funeral, where the gentleman with whom I now sat, then a boy of six years, attended as chief mourner. I recollected the greyish tint of the sky, and the colour and smell of the Thames, on that day, when Nature appeared in her pensive, half-mourning weeds, as I hurried on from London to Rochester in the stage-coach.

"This is quite a duty to your mind, Richard," my brother had said. He wished to make me his deputy. "I have some touch of a flying gout to-day, and am, besides, to tell the truth, so plaguily busy at this opening of the term. The undertaker will, of course, do every thing in the best manner; but the Walpoles are not persons to be neglected—and I shall like to be able to write to Northamptonshire, that, though indisposition prevented me from attending the funeral, *my brother* had seen every proper attention paid to the remains of Lieutenant Walpole, which became his birth and family."

"His *remains!*—could nothing have been done for the animated body? Is he the same poor young man I saw lately at your chambers?"

"The same, poor fellow! He was severely wounded in the affair of Alkmaer, and brought into Chatham. There is a poor widow, too, who posted down to meet him, and one or two children. It is a melancholy story,—but Anne will tell you all about it. I have no time,—only my instructions from Sir Hugh Walpole's steward, are, that the funeral be conducted in the most respectable manner; and that the death be properly, but simply announced in the *St. James's Chronicle*. Will you attend to that too?"

"And the young widow, and the two or three children?"

"O! I have no orders about them, I am sorry to say. Walpole's was some foolish love-match, I believe."

There was no time to lose. I put myself into my half-worn suit of solemn black, and, declining the proffered chaise, which I then conceived a robbery of the widow, reached Rochester by a common stage-coach. The whole scene, though past for twenty-three years, instantly revived to my memory, with its principal actors, Governor Fox and the little weeping boy whom he led in his hand, with the bit of rusty crape tied over the sleeve of his blue jacket. That boy was now transformed into the gentleman opposite to whom I sat.

On this particular day, as Walpole vowed he did not know what to do with himself, I had consented to dine with him *tête-à-tête*, to survey his new house which he had just entered. He was at the high-top-gallant of his joy, in the way of making a rapid fortune; and within a few days of marrying my third, and it is said favourite niece, Charlotte, for whom he had, in the ladies' phrase, *proposed* three years before; and who, if not absolutely denied to his hopes, had been *prudently* withheld. I had been a kind of half-confidant of their attachment,—my latent romance a qualifier in their behalf of excessive parental prudence.

"I shall begin to believe what you old folks say of the brevity of life," said Walpole. "Looking backward, 'down the vista of time elapsed,' to that funeral service in Rochester cathedral, the distance appears so mere a span,—yet it is full two-and-twenty years since,—older than Charlotte."

One way or other we were disposed to become very social and communicative on this particular afternoon. The verge of the new life upon which he stood, was to Walpole a point of 'vantage, from which he could look back with complacency on the rough, up-hill track he had traversed in storm and calm, in sunshine and shadow; with many changes of fortune, but ever, I believe, with a hopeful and unfaltering spirit. Prominent before him, in every early stage, stood the image of the old Governor, whose oddities and humours were but so many incrustations to which the predilections of friends might grow and cling the faster.

"Poor old fellow! I hoped next week to have given him the pleasure of seeing Charlotte."—There was too much *Charlotte* in our talk certainly for good taste; but in a bridegroom an uncle might forgive it, especially when the bride was his favourite niece.—"I thought he would have weathered out a few more winters! for, except the load of nearly eighty years, and a touch of deafness, which made him only more pleasant by making him more testy than before, there was not a symptom of vital decay about him. Here is a letter of his not yet five days old, written

with his usual brevity; but every character as sturdy, firm, and right-angled, as his best official despatches forty years back.—Many of them, I warrant me, lying in the Colonial Office still unopened. Well, I owe him a libation, any way. Here's to the memory of Stephen Fox! in the liquor he loved best —sound old port."

"I should not have imagined port an African Governor's favourite drink."

"He had lived long enough in England for it to have become so.—You know, I presume, that Governor Fox rose from the ranks. The Ishmaelite took great pride in the circumstance that Stephen Fox owed no favour to any patron."

"I know that, and much more good of him."

"For example, that it was not his fault that I, your nephew-elect, am not a Northamptonshire Squire, lord of three manors. Even his kindness I owe to *her* to whom my friends may trace whatever is bearable about me,—to my poor mother."

Walpole was in the fair way, in his mixed mood of a gentle sorrow tempering full-blown joy, to an overflow of heart. It is so rare in these highly civilized times for one man to let another have a peep into his breast, that were the confidence fairly given, though by a shoe-black to a Prince, such is sympathetic human nature, that I believe it would be prized.

"Did you ever know that I had been an author in my time, Mr. Richard?" he went on.

"It is rare to meet with a man under thirty who is not,—but I was not aware of your initiation."

"I am one of *you*, however. Re-wrote three formidable pamphlets or Memorials to the Colonial Secretary, setting forth ten thousand abuses connected with that African sovereignty; and, before I was sixteen, *grinded*, and partly *top-dressed*, the Autobiography and the Opinions of Men and Things, at home and abroad, of Stephen Fox, Esq. Captain of Marines, and Governor of that abandoned fort, which he conceived of more importance to Great Britain than all her Eastern and Australian Colonies taken together. To the abandonment of that pitiful pin-fold, kept for British soldiers to rot in, and the abolition of the Slave Trade, he imputed the enormous increase of the National Debt, the power of Napoleon, and all the disasters of this country.—My dressing spoiled his story, I have no doubt. All self-taught persons, as the best educated men are often called, tell their own tale best; but though he affected to despise Greek and Latin, he had the good stupid old English veneration for scholarship:—as if his own pithy mother-English had not been twenty times better than my raw, pedantic, dog-Latin style."

I confess I relished more such racy morsels of his own story, as I had from time to time heard the Governor relate, *viva voce*, than the elaborate narrative polished by young Walpole, which it had cost its hero many years of his later life to add to and revise, when he had become so deaf and cross, as the Chatham ladies said, that no soul in Rochester, Chatham, Brompton, or Stroud, or the regions thereabout, however devoted to the four aces and the odd trick, would sit down to a rubber with him.

When I first saw Governor Fox he must have been near sixty. He had returned to England but six months before, and had plunged himself into twice as many lawsuits about nothing. He seemed at the period of his return, taken altogether, (though there was a touch of the sea about him,) the hardest, most angular, and bristly specimen of the old unmodified domineering soldier of the German wars, that I had ever coped with: and I confess a latent prepossession against the whole class,—so different from the enlightened and liberalized modern soldier, whose profession has thrown him into the exact line of the "march of mind" and the conflict of opinion; while civilians either remain wrapped up in their original prejudices, or get rid of them much more slowly.

There was nothing very remarkable in the early history of the Governor. It was his pride to tell that he was the son of a miller, on one of those Northamptonshire manors which belonged to the Walpole family, and that he had been on the world, his own master and provider, from eleven years of age. His manner of abandoning his home was quite characteristic.

"The old fellow," he would say, "had seven of us, sir, you observe; and when the poor woman was carried off by fever, he could not easily do without a housekeeper,—the curate told him so on the day of the funeral. But that was no reason for bringing home, in three months, a snivelling jade from Peterborough, good for nothing but bearing sickly brats and drinking tea, instead of a hearty motherly countrywoman, who would have known the gage of his boys' stomachs, and kept their shirts clean."

It was in this respectful manner that the Governor spoke to Mrs. Walpole and myself, of father, mother, and step-dame; and his small, grey-green eyes would twinkle with roguish malice, when he told us, that after being half-starved, and often beaten by his mother-in-law, his father was one day persuaded by her to flog him, for breaking some favourite china tea-cup, and that for this he took the glorious revenge of smashing every article of crockery she had brought to the farm-house, before taking flight from the paternal roof for ever. He had fled across the country, and got to the Suffolk coast. From thence, in a ship to London, and thence again to the uttermost parts of the earth. He was, at least, no more heard of in Northamptonshire for above thirty years of hardship and adventure. In the course of that time, he had been first ship-boy, and then private, corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, and captain of marines; but it so happened that he had never visited England. His stations were the West Indies or the African coast; and, for a long time, he had been doing duty in New South Wales. The Governor's early years had not flown on wings of down. I am, indeed, afraid that a ship-boy in a British merchantman, is often one of the veriest slaves on earth. "Nothing good about it, sir," the Governor would say, "but the pease soup, and allowance of salt junk, when stores were full.—I knew something about my book while at home in Northamptonshire, and could have answered, 'Who gave you that name?' 'My godfathers and godmothers,' and such like; but all religion was forgotten at sea. It was not till I was corporal, a tall fellow of twenty-one, that I took seriously to my learning. I saw by the Scots, that there was no getting on without it."

The Governor had never taken doggedly to any one thing in his life, without making something of it, either by fair means or violent, were it but repairing the pathway, or watering the road to Chatham. He owed his first commission to a sudden mortality among the troops, which carried off the seven officers of the party, and left Sergeant Fox in chief command of the fort, of which he, twenty years afterwards, became the Governor. It was bravely and skilfully defended by the sergeant and the few remaining marines fit for duty, when suddenly attacked by the insurgent natives, who had learned the sickly state of the garrison. The Commander-in-chief was so much pleased with the courage, promptitude, and judgment, displayed by the sergeant, and by the clearness and brevity of his despatches, that he was at once commissioned.

"It was all my *luck*, sir," he would say, "that Abercromby happened to be chief in command then. Had it been —— now, why I might have rotted out in the service as Sergeant Fox. Yet Abercromby was a Scotsman, and —— a countryman of my own.—I am not partial to the Scots, sir. Too many of them have lately got into the marine service,—far too many of the hungry rapscallions come here to eat up Englishmen's bread and beef; but, as poor Ned Walpole would say, that young chap's father, 'the Scots are like water-melons, nineteen you may throw to the pigs, but the twentieth is a fellow to make your mouth water,'—Sir Ralph was one of the twentieths, sir."

This is a faint specimen of the talk of my old friend the Governor. The Scottish nation were not singular in his bad graces. He was, indeed, qualified to gain the full love of Dr. Johnson, as a most energetic and thorough hater. While abroad, he had hated Jews, Frenchmen, Scots, and Irish, but, above all, the Americans—the Yankees. He was also rather jealous of the naval service: but the military was the object of his peculiar disgust. Indeed, half his despatches and memorials went to prove the entire uselessness of troops of the line and cavalry: seamen alone—the wooden walls! with well-appointed marine corps, being all that was needed for the defence of Old England and her colonies.—The general name, Great Britain, was one the Governor never would recognise.

After his return to England his hatreds remained undiminished in force, and increased in number; but their objects gradually changed, exactly as did the external relations of the Governor. In a few years, people said, he was no longer the same man; but he was the very same individual in a new position. By the time I enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance, among the numerous objects of his spleen were the Colonial Secretary, with every individual connected with the Colonial department; the Anti-slavery party, and especially their leaders, with the ladies he called the She-Saints. On these ladies he poured unmitigated wrath.

Governor Fox had also many minor and individual objects of detestation, such as the Baptist druggist, who opposed him at vestry-meetings, and the numerous brood of Northamptonshire Foxes, let loose upon him as soon as he returned home with a fortune. As

no one could tell the amount of that fortune, every one was at liberty to guess, and to fix upon the scale best fitted to his own ideas of the wealth and magnificence, corresponding to the dignity of Governor Fox. It seemed to cost him more trouble to defend his pocket from the real and imaginary attacks made on it by "this greedy pack," as he styled his numerous relations, than his Fort and Government from the *natives*, of whom he spoke with much greater respect and affection. This Government he had abandoned in a hot fit of ill-humour, because, during the short administration of his namesake Fox, at the beginning of the century, he had been privately admonished concerning his arbitrary, if not oppressive, dismissal of a Wesleyan missionary from his station, whom he threatened to tar and feather if he ventured to approach the colony again. And the Governor would have been a man of his word.

Home he came, after an absence of fifty years, in a hissing-hot fit of tropical rage. "Those Whig fellows," he said, "were all Buonaparte and Wilberforce men. They would destroy all subordination and good government, and play the devil with Old England. They had done so already.—What a pretty place they had made of Northamptonshire! every thing turned topsy-turvy there; and one Peel, a spinning-jenny fellow, in possession of some of the finest manors in Staffordshire and his own native county."

But I have not yet got to this chapter. Nothing at this time could irritate the Governor more than being supposed a humble cousin of the Holland family, save being questioned on his probable descent from George Fox, the founder of the Quakers. "I'm a whelp of a better litter," he would say;—angry perhaps,—such is human nature,—that he was not able to reply in the affirmative.

Yet with such ideas in 1806, I lived to see the Governor, under the combined influence of shrewd commonsense, a strong, unperverted, however unenlightened, love of justice, and a splenetic temper, fearfully aggravated by his long residence abroad and the habit of absolute command, become a stanch Reformer, in all save the name. It might have helped to sharpen his scent for abuses that he no longer profited by them in any shape. It became his boast, "that Stephen Fox, though a man of fifteen stone, did not add one ounce to the *dead-weight*." He had sold his commission, and, for a wonder, drew no retired salary from his abolished Government. He was, therefore, free to grumble and complain of every thing, as fast as one grievance was found out after another, from his excised cigar to his taxed pipe of Madeira. It was amusing to me to watch the stages the Governor made on the high-road to the grumbling state, often nick-named Radicalism, sometimes slowly, sometimes by a great kangaroo leap; as in the affair of his property-tax, an impost then so arbitrarily levied.

The OLD ENGLAND to which Governor Fox had returned, did not in the least resemble the Old England of his imagination; the England which, prosaic as he was thought to be, had haunted him under the torrid skies of Africa, with visions of cool green lanes, open breezy downs, and driving his mother's cows at dewy dawn to the village common.

This desired land to which he came back, was not even the Old England of recollection. The Governor's first experiment was made, in Northamptonshire, in the scene of his childhood; and it proved a complete failure. Ten years afterwards he related the adventures of his journey to me, with fire and fury in his eyes:—

"I pitched my tent in the *New* Royal Oak, sir,—for the *Oak* itself was down every stone of it,—and the buxom landlady, who often, when I carried her eggs from the mill, wont to give me a good hunch of home-baked bread—*home-baked*, you observe, well buttered with lard,—had gone the way we must all follow, sir;—for some time I took my Christian name of Stephen,—Mr. Stephen, a gentleman from foreign parts, looking about him. I wished to reconnoitre the Fox earths, you observe, without putting 'em all on the scent after 'the grand Governor, their cousin, and his Indiey fortin.'" The Governor had a spice of English humour about him, though his rage or hot choler often dried it up.

"Old England has been on the quick march since you went abroad, I guess, sir," quoth my puppy landlord,—"you must see great changes and *improvements* in the village, Mr. Stephen?"

"Quick march to Old Nick, man,—with the Whigs, drumming her on.—The fellow did not mean to tell me, Mr. Richard, that the poor cottagers who grazed their cows on the common are a fig the better for yonder new cake-houses, filled with the bull-frog farmers, and their ladies, forsooth! and the small Esquire puppies, with their belts, clumps, and circular sweeps.—A great change, quoth he! To be sure I did see that:—English labourers wearing cotton-

rags, meaner than the convicts' slop-clothes at Botany Bay,—and their dames sloping at treacled bohea. A great change, truly! An empty rectory, sir, and a full Methodist chapel,—cottagers' dwellings fallen to ruin, and a big workhouse erected. Not a spot of ground on which the poor man dare set his foot; and their common divided among thieves;—a good slice to the Lord of the Manor, but a better, I'm told, to his steward.—A great change, forsooth! Rents doubled and tripled:—yet every other estate eaten up with Jew mortgages, and wheat at £4, 10s. a-quarter!"

In short, the Governor had been displeased wherever he went, and with every thing he heard and saw; but especially with his rapacious kindred, to the tenth degree, whom he styled "worse than the blood-sucking vampires of Surinam." From some marine predilections and old friendships, he had originally fixed his head-quarters at Rochester, to be near Chatham; and thither he returned from Northamptonshire, quarrelling with every soul he encountered at home or a-field:—with turnpike-gate keepers, guards and drivers, overcharging landlords, and a new, unknown species of greedy animal, called *Boots*. On the road his testy temper and mahogany complexion obtained him credit for being an American on his travels, a mistake enough of itself to have provoked the Governor to do murder. "A true-born Englishman could not, in these days, be known for one in Old England!"

At home Governor Fox appealed against every tax-gatherer, and from all manner of impostures and surcharges. He had one lawsuit about the right to a pump in the stable-yard; and another about the party-wall which divided his bit of garden from the premises of the Baptist druggist. His tailor cheated him in buckram and broad-cloth, and he first swore at him, like his namesake, frugal King Stephen, and then kicked him out. The tailor very properly "took the law of him." His housekeeper was saucy when he gave orders, or looked into matters unbecoming the munificence and dignity of a Governor whom *she* served,—and he would have dearly liked to kick her too. His laundress was unpunctual, because she washed for the gentlemen of the *line*, who were often in a hurry to embark; and in free Old England, of which he had so long boasted, it was neither thought seemly to flog a scullion-wench, nor yet the frequent custom to kick even a tailor.

The Governor had been too long habituated to a summary redress of domestic grievances, not to make repeated attempts at introducing tropical discipline into his Rochester household, for its more speedy and effectual reform. This produced endless actions for assault and battery, and prosecutions for the recovery of wages and board. Now it was the cook gave warning, and went off on the third day, just before dinner; now the chambermaid "would have his honour to know *she* was not to be *sarved* like his black niggers!"

On one occasion he was left alone in the house with Black Sam, a negro-lad he had brought home. Sam had grown up with him from a very young boy; so to him he made, on the whole, a kind master, notwithstanding a little occasional African discipline. He had taken considerable pains with Sam's early education. It was the Governor himself had taught him to polish boots to perfection, groom a horse, keep his teeth and nails clean, and repeat the Creed.

The three days in which the Governor and Sam were alone in the house, were, on the whole, the most tranquil he had yet known in England. He contemplated living in future merely with Sam, and a groom lad who slept out, and letting "no saucy jade, with her teapot, and her hair-papers, ever again enter his door," or female of any kind; unless some of his nautical friends, who made trading trips to the Coast, would bring him over a handy negro-wench, about eighteen; whom he mentally proposed to marry to Sam, and thus raise a breed of *niggers* for the home supply. The only obstacle to this scheme, was his frequent purpose of turning his back upon Old England, its taxes and fogs, its paupers and pampered servants, altogether, and returning to Africa: which he probably would have done in a fit of spleen, save that his funds were now locked up—in one or other of the many "profitable investments," that had, by this time, been recommended and urged upon him—and could not easily be realized.

I do not think the Governor could have been avaricious while he enjoyed power; but in Old England, like every other man, he soon found that next to power—great power—and superior to rank, is *money*. If he had previously ever liked money, it was negatively, not positively. At the beginning of the French war, and in the end of the American war, he had made considerable prize-money. He took no pains to increase it. But as he never spent,—and, at his Coast

Fort, was neither troubled with needy cousins, blood-sucking tax-gatherers, tailors who cabbaged broadcloth, nor smart housekeepers who liked their masters to have things handsome about them, — his fortune had imperceptibly accumulated. Still he never spent. The housekeeper and cook had been forced on him by the Chatham ladies, who liked to patronize an old rich Governor, and to assist in his household appointments, because he "was such an acquisition to the neighbourhood!"

The Governor, of all human things, abhorred and despised a spendthrift, next to a dirty woman, a drunken marine, a negro in a state of perspiration, or a lady carrying about a subscription-paper for a religious charity. A man who outran his means was a knave, and dishonoured; and there was no more to be said of him. No indulgence, no sympathy, for the poor subaltern who got into difficulties. "The puppy, sir, knew his means," said he to me, in reference to a poor lieutenant, with a sickly wife and three or four children, who was known at this time to be in great distress in an adjoining lodging. — "A man sir, may live *handsomely* upon a shilling a day; *comfortably* upon sixpence. *I* have done with less."

This was always conclusive. "The man who is a slave to his belly or his back — or to the vanity of some silly hussy he may have married, must drink as he brews. I don't know how it is with those who buy and sell; but I know this, that I never wish to see any man my debtor, for from that moment I am tempted to hate and despise him. I cannot feel for him like a Christian — he seems meaner than a *nigger*."

With these ideas, the Governor, ever since his return, had been looking about him for what moneyed capitalists call a profitable investment. With all his natural shrewdness, a great deal of simplicity and no small portion of credulity were mingled in his character, which laid him open to the designing. From the many "profitable investments" he had made, several fortunes were to be realized. One large fortune he was making, by shares in a brewery of Scottish ale, made at Rochester, for the London market; another was to arise from shares of a commercial *speculation* to South America; and a third, more singular still, by shares of the Drury-Lane Theatre! Each concern was of large promise; but, in the meanwhile, another lawsuit was on the *tapis*.

On the fourth day of the joint housekeeping of black Sam and his master, the Governor, before walking to Chatham Barracks, his ordinary morning promenade, gave his orders for the day: — dinner punctual at five, — a sole, a curried chicken, and tomatas. He was not absolutely sure whether Colonel Bamboo of the Marines would mess with him that day or not: but, at all events, a couple of chops in addition would do the thing well enough in a bachelor way, with a bottle of *his* East India Madeira. This last was a lure rarely resisted by the retired *militaires*, with whom he daily conferred on the bad conduct of the war, and the important aid the marines lent to the regulars, who deprived the amphibious heroes of their laurels.

Colonel Bamboo, having no other engagement, accepted the invitation, — as it was indeed a hundred to one that he would unless he had had a better. I happened to be that day in Rochester on business connected with Mrs. Walpole's endless Chancery suit; and the Governor had reasons of his own for being civil to his solicitor's brother; and, besides, "abhorred fellows devouring widows' substance like Methodist parsons," especially that of the "Widow Walpole," or "Ned's widow," for whom he had conceived a high respect. In brief, to spare her couple of mutton-chops, as he considerately supposed, he introduced me to his friend, Bamboo, and frankly vouchsafed me a share of the *currie* and the *sole*. We walked towards the snug box, for it was no more, occupied by the Governor, who meanwhile studied Robins's advertisements, and sometimes had visions of an estate and a mansion in Northamptonshire, as soon as the Scottish ale and old Drury had laid their golden eggs.

No black Sam appeared to the master-knock of the Governor, who became apprehensive that his trusty major-domo might have been taken suddenly ill. Failure in punctuality was quite out of reckoning with the Governor.

"We never have any *accidents*," was his reply to Bamboo's suggestion. "I never allow accidents. Something must have bedevilled Sam."

Governor Fox was essentially a humane man, — if my readers can reconcile humanity with the exercise of moderate flogging. I do not mean to say he was a man of quick sensibility, or of any delicacy or refinement of feeling; but he could sympathize with cold, hunger, filth, the ague, and the dry colic, — for these ills he had experienced himself, — ay, and do more for the relief of the

sufferers under them than persons of far finer feelings.

Neither cold, hunger, nor ague, could be suspected here; so it must be the other case. And, by the help of Bamboo, the Governor scaled the wall with surprising agility, to make a breach by the back-kitchen. While he was thus engaged, in fingering about the latch I chanced to find it open, and accordingly advanced with Bamboo from the front so as to encounter the party that approached by the rear. What was the Governor's rage to find the sooty object of his recent solicitude, his frizzly hair greased and powdered, and his person decked out in his holiday frilled shirt and scarlet waistcoat,—not dead drunk —an African seldom is so—but intoxicated to the pitch of madness, strutting about the kitchen, his arms extended, and his eyes rolling, spouting

"Slabes cannot breadth in Hengland!"

The scene was irresistibly ludicrous.

"You confounded black rascal, what have you been after? Are you drunk, you villain?"

"Yes! me drunk, Massa Goberner! Glorious drunk!" cried Sam. "Me no black rascal; me free nigger!—free as Massa Goberner, or Massa Colonel Bamby—

"Slabes cannot breadth in Hengland!"

I feared the Governor would have choked; he became black in the face. "You cursed impudent negro dog, who has been putting this rebellious stuff into your woolly head? You shall find, you villain, that slaves can both breathe and howl in England. Where is my whip?"

"In de lobby, massa," cried the blubbering, terrified black, from the mere spaniel-like instinct of obedience. "Oh, Massa, Massa Goberner, no flog, no flog your—*slave!*"

The scene became painfully mixed with the ludicrous and the pitiable. I had as great an antipathy to the phrase *your slave* as Matthew Lewis himself,—as great a horror of the scourge as any man,—as dejected a spirit to find the heroic resolution inspired by the new-born sense of freedom so easily cowed in poor Sam. It was scarcely to be expected that the Governor would spare the rod upon this occasion; but his rage ran too high to allow his punishment to be very effective. The length of the driving whip, with which he administered discipline, made it recoil, and coil at every fresh stroke round his own person; while Sam skipped, and leaped, and screamed about, with little or no corporal damage, however his new-born notions of personal liberty might be outraged, until the Governor was fairly blown by the unusual exertion. Colonel Bamboo held it as a point of honour not to interfere with a gentleman's right "to wallop his own nigger," even though Sam had not richly deserved a flogging by neglect of the sole, the currie, the lime punch, and other et ceteras.

The result was, that the Governor dragged and partly kicked Sam into his usual lair, turned the key upon him, refreshed himself and his friends, after his fatigues, with a rummer of Madeira and water, and, like an old campaigner, making all safe in garrison, locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and took his way with us to dine at the barracks' mess, where we were sure of a welcome, and for which there was still time.

It was but three or four days later that I saw the Governor arrive at my brother's chambers, in a towering passion, vowing, with a deep imprecation, that if he spent his last shilling of ready money, and sold out his Drury-Lane shares, he would have justice on the canting, snivelling, hypocritical Methodist scoundrels, who had first put such rebellious notions into the head of his *slave*, then broken into his house, and now wanted to deprive him of his *property*.

Sam, after we left the house, instead of sleeping off his liquor as his master had intended, had been overheard bellowing in his half-drunken state by the neighbours, who, in their zeal of humanity, had broken into the house and freed the captive.

The case was warmly taken up by certain persons more distinguished for zeal than discrimination, and particularly by the vestry opponents of the Governor. Black Sam, therefore, enjoyed the felicity of being, for a few days, the talk of many tea-tables, and the guest or lion of a few. He was represented as the son of an African Prince, inveigled, when a child, by the Governor, into the Fort, and made a slave, while his parents were massacred. Though Sam was rather an honest fellow, and at bottom warmly attached to "Massa Goberner," he had not heart all at once to strip himself of those imputed honours of birth, or to deny that he had been cruelly kidnapped from his royal parents.

My brother's endeavours to prevent a fresh suit, upon account of Black Sam, were quite thrown away. The Governor swore he would have the rascal back, were it but to make pie-meat of the ungrateful, rebellious *nigger*,

if there was any justice or law left in England. If Mr. James Taylor would not take up the case, why then another would. There was, thank God, no scarcity of attorneys in London. The fact was undeniable.

The case gave rise to several amusing scenes, particularly when Black Sam and the Governor met face to face as parties in Court. So strong was the habit of slavery in the subdued soul of the poor, trembling African, that he could scarcely be primed to meet the terrible Governor at all, but never once to confront him manfully; while it required the utmost vigilance of his counsel, and his friends, and a hundred warnings about the dignity and sanctity of the temples of justice in England, to impress upon the Governor the necessity of restraining himself from inflicting punishment on the black hide of "that ungrateful scoundrel Sam," in open Court. The array of "She-Saints," who appeared as spectators, exasperated him still more. He tried to affront them to their faces, by asking aloud of Bamboo, who stood by him, "What all those ugly hussies wanted in a Court?—had they no work at home—or had they taken a longing for black flesh, like the unnatural woman in Shakspere's play, which he had seen acted at Kingston?"

The unkindest cut made by the champions of freedom, in the person of black Sam, was compelling Colonel Bamboo to bear witness to the flogging. Every military gentleman who heard of the circumstance, declared it a d——d unhandsome proceeding, to compel a gentleman to so flagrant a violation of honour and hospitality. Bamboo managed with great delicacy and tact, and gave the Governor a flaming character for humanity, which, in the instance of Black Sam, I rather believed he deserved. Governor Fox was, he said, remarkable for humanity to all his negroes—he had been known to administer their medicine himself, and to attend the hospital, in the meanest offices, when the soldiers were too sickly to do duty.

The Governor got rather well off, in short, though he considered himself the worst used gentleman that ever had claimed justice in an English Court. For "was not Sam his born slave? and was not the nigger declared as free and good a man as any white Christian?"

This unrighteous decision, with a swingeing sum of costs, made him a more determined hater than ever of all Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, and *She-Saints*,—the last class, in particular, were, from this date, his mortal antipathy. But Old England, herself, sunk still farther in his esteem. She was become a land fit only for tax-gatherers, pensioners, and canting Methodists. He would go back to the West Indies! A few retired veterans, and families of military, or West India connexion, warmly joined the faction of the Governor, and the neighbourhood was kept in hot water between the Slavery and Anti-slavery, the Evangelical and the Church party, who, to say truth, had, on some points, very little Christian charity to divide between them.

It afforded a great triumph to the Governor, about three months after Sam had been rescued from his tyrannical grasp, and declared a free man, to find the poor fellow in rags, begging on the streets of London. He had just been dismissed from an hospital. The poor creature would have been most thankful to be restored, on any terms, to his old quarters; and as those of the Governor, though they implied complete slavery, said nothing about half rations or flogging, he was delighted to return *home*, as he called the Governor's dwelling.

On a Saturday night, therefore, the Governor, who liked this kind of duty, saw Sam duly scrubbed, and well-soused with divers buckets of water, administered by the groom, at the same pump about which the lawsuit was proceeding, and his rags burned in the yard; to free him, the Governor said, "of the vermin he had gathered among the Saints." Next morning, piqued into making Sam as good a Christian as they could do for their hearts, he strictly examined him, himself, on the Creed, and enjoyed the triumph of telling a military chaplain, that, "With all the canting of the Evangelical fellows, Sam, in the three months he had been among them, had been so much neglected in his religious principles, that he committed more blunders in repeating his Creed, than when he was only ten years old; though he pretended the old ladies had taught him to pray off book."

Sam submitted to be paraded before the windows of some of his late emancipators, with a legend about his neck, bearing that he, Sam, a black man of the Sow-sow nation, was the born slave of Governor Stephen Fox!

For some weeks Sam's master and he went on tolerably well together, until it was discovered that Sam, who was socially inclined, sometimes, when the Governor dined at Chatham, stole out to a prayer meeting. This was crime enough of itself; but a

waggish ensign informed the Governor that his own servant, who was also an attendant, told that Sam publicly prayed every night, "That Goramighty would hear the poor nigger's prayers, and have mercy on the sinful soul of poor, ould, wicked Massa Gubbana; and not send him to the bad place."

If not held back by main force, the Governor would certainly have gone forthwith, and dispersed the alleged conventicle by the use of his cane. As it was, he vowed he would break every bone in the black knave's carcass! Pray for him, indeed! Him, a white Christian! Was there not Bishops and Rectors enough, well paid, too, in England, to pray for Churchmen; but Methodists, and Niggers, and She-Saints, must have the impudence to pray for them! He would have the Church look to that.

Poor Sam, under view of the whip—often threatened, but seldom applied—on his knees, promised that he never again would have the audacity to pray for his white master.

Under this religious persecution he was tempted from without to leave his master a second time; but Sam still remembered how hungry and cold he had been, and he said, "Black Sam stay and pray for poor wicked Massa Gubbana: him best understand Sam's congsitution. Bery good Massa when not in a huff——"

The Governor, whatever his pious neighbours might think of it, piqued himself on being a most exemplary Church Christian. Unlike black Sam, he could repeat the Creed without blundering one word. In his Fort he had made a point of reading the Service every Sunday morning,—and on Monday morning, of flogging as many of the negroes as did not attend chapel. Zealously had he defended the outworks of the Church from the attacks of Methodists, as he had proved by his angry abdication. He would have sworn to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and with a perfectly safe conscience, as often as any statute required or custom dictated. For why?—"every body, save Methodists and Presbyterians, did so." It is probable that the Governor, who was, in every point, a man of action, did not enjoy the ministrations of a regular clergyman so well as his own service; for, until the era of black Sam, he had not regularly attended Church. Now he went,—marching his marshalled household to church, every morning, Sam walking before, carrying his master's crimson and gold large Prayer Book; which was to the Governor exactly what his breviary is to a good Catholic—a thing of mysterious sanctity; something resembling a bishop in full canonicals—a tangible and comely body of faith. The Bible held but a secondary place in the Governor's esteem. It was a good book, to be read on holyday evenings, by those who had time, but suspiciously revered by the Scotch, the Methodists, and Quakers.

Now, solemnly seated, at the head of his pew, the *Amen* certainly did not stick in his throat. His strenuous responses, and loud joining in the psalm, overpowered the choir and startled the congregation. He now partook of the communion regularly at Christmas, Easter, and other solemn tides; because such was the *duty* of a churchman, and because he read in the newspapers that the King and the Royal Family did so, with the Dukes of York and Clarence. A doubt of his fitness had never once clouded his mind. This was a mysterious rite, in which all good churchmen, rich and poor, were entitled to participate—and none else: and no "missionary puppies" had a right to dispense the holy sacrament, nor negroes to partake of it. He had never permitted such a profanation in his Government.

The religious opinions of Governor Fox might not have been the most enlightened, but they were the natural growth of his education, and of the system working around him. He was, like most other human beings, very much the creature of external influences; and he had been, for the greater part of his life, placed in circumstances which shut out light by nearly every approach. In England, light streamed in through many crannies. I have said that the Governor, save on the question of slavery, the black *niggers*, and the Church, latterly became a sort of Tory-Radical; and it may be regarded as a sign of the times, that, towards the close of his life, he had been so far corrupted by Cobbett's writings as to begin to question why a Bishop should have so much higher *pay* than an Admiral of the Red; and a Rector, than a Colonel of Marines? He never got further than this; though the direct operation of *tithe* upon himself would, I have no doubt, in one season, have made the Governor a thorough Church-reformer. He had already, by the unaided light of conscience, discovered that *no work no pay*, was the true principle to which society should adhere, with all its servants. At Church-rate he grumbled excessively; and for this hardship his remedy was, that the Methodists,

his general term for all dissenters, should be made to contribute double, to relieve churchmen of such burdens.

I am afraid that my old friend will scarce appear either a very amiable or even consistent character. He was, however, quite consistent with himself. Besides, I have hitherto been exhibiting his asperities and angular points, in that unhappy interval of ten years, when, having just lost absolute power, he had not yet learned to live on terms of equality and forbearance with his fellow men; and when every passing day, from his own overbearing conduct, litigiousness, and credulity, was roughly dispelling his life-long dreams of the state of society in happy Old England. His faults were more those of ignorance and temper than of heart. As his understanding expanded, his judgment became more correct and his character improved. Though his prejudices were violent, they were few. He had no respect for names or persons, no partisan feelings, save in the *nigger*, and the Church cases; and in him these were at least honest. Present any truth to him; and if he was able to perceive, he at once embraced it. General or abstract truth was not in his way.—His, from original constitution and training, was a mind of facts and details; yet without any large views or well-defined principles, he often arrived at fair, practical conclusions. His moral pole-star was *duty*, though he had no very enlarged idea of the principle. His duty to his horse, to black Sam, and his country, stood pretty much on the same level; though he might have a clearer idea of the former than of the latter kind of duty.

I have dwelt too long in these generalities. The first time I beheld Governor Fox, with knowledge,—so, I mean, as to note and remember him as a man of some mark,—was, as I have said, at the funeral of Lieutenant Walpole, leading "poor Ned's boy," as his phrase was. This was to see him to advantage. He was hotly and most characteristically alive to the indignity offered, as he thought, to the memory of "poor Ned," by the Walpole family sending an undertaker and their agent's brother, to see the last *duties* performed. Though he had quarrelled with all his kindred himself, he entertained that true old English respect for the *remains* of relations by blood, that had the degree of consanguinity exacted the attention, he would at once have travelled a hundred miles to fulfil the duty of attending their funerals—putting himself, as the *Gazette* says, "into decent mourning." "Poor Ned" was only a brother officer—scarcely even that, for he had the misfortune to belong to the regulars—and the Governor appeared at the funeral in his ordinary dress, with the customary knot of crape on his arm. He might at this time have been about sixty-two years of age; but he had not lost one hair's-breadth of his original stature of five feet ten inches, nor a single tooth. The strongest impression given by the first view of his person and physiognomy was that of decision. His firm structure, and compact fibre, the movement of his limbs, his erect, and somewhat stiff mien, the firmness of his walk, his compressed lips, and loud tone of voice, all bespoke promptitude, and hardy, confident decision,—a man never given to question or doubt, much less to speculate. Yet no one could have dreamed that his was the decision of a high and vigorous intellect. It was the pushing, strenuous force, the sinewy and muscular determination, of a bold animal, or of a strong-willed man, whose maxim is, "Where there is a will, there is a way."

The eye was the most striking feature in the tanned face of the old Governor. In a cold day, when I have seen him buttoned and wrapped above the nose, and the eye alone visible, it was a luminary to be marked. That strong greyish-green, clear, frosty eye, quick but not penetrating, was of itself enough to show the man of prompt decision. It was certainly not in the least an eye like that of Mars, "to threaten or command;" yet it could sometimes twinkle and scintillate in a way which plainly demonstrated that the person who looked at you was not a character which it might be altogether prudent to trifle with. I have seen something very like it, though far more cunning, and as it were better instructed, under the shaggy brows of a Bow Street officer, near the head of the department. It would have been a perfectly appropriate feature in the countenance of a pilot, a smuggler, a whaler; then it might have been more ferocious or uneasy in expression; now, when it lightened, it was only an angry, not a ferocious eye—the eye of a man who could flourish a whip, but who abhorred a stiletto.

His natural love of order, a military education, and long residence in a burning climate, had made my old friend scrupulous and even finical about personal cleanliness, and in all his arrangements of the toilet. "*Cleanliness*," he said, "his mother had taught him, was next to *Godliness;* and the physical virtue

was certainly much better understood by the Governor than the spiritual grace. The one dwelt in forms and usages, the other was shown in the thorough, daily, and hourly purification of the spotlessly kept outward man. His *costume* denoted the *substance* and respectability of the wearer. It was an invariable ample blue coat, of the finest cloth, with red facings, and under garments of the same material, which in summer were exchanged for white linen or nankeen. The black stock had its own set,—the hat, like that of every man of individual character, its own fit. His boots, very thick in the soles, seemed a part of his original structure. I never saw him out of them but twice, and then he rolled like a sailor come on shore after being five years afloat, and scarcely looked his own man. The Governor's taste was fixed before the date of embroidered military surtouts and Hessians, which he despised, together with the most of the "*regular* puppies" who wore them. All his habits were as fixed as his dress. His favourite dish was roast pork, with bean-pudding; his general drink, rum and water. But though plain in his own taste, he was not stinted in hospitality, unless he saw his guests troublesome or gourmands. Such characters he despised even more than he did a *nigger* or a Yankee. His favourite game was backgammon, though he played a cool, steady game at whist,—showing no indulgence to lax players; insisting upon every advantage to which he was fairly entitled, and no more; and sticking punctiliously to the *game*, the whole *game*, and nothing but the *game*. His poet was Dibdin, but on holydays, Sternhold and Hopkins; his favourite author was De Foe, whose stories he could never fully persuade himself were fictions, though he knew this was generally said. He had at once found out "that fellow Gulliver," which I presented to him: "He was all bam!" The Governor had "sailed the world round, and seen no such little people; and, what was more, there was nothing of them in Mr. Guthrie's Grammar of Geography"—his staple scientific work. If any one would have taken the trouble, as I sometimes did, to tell him of the adventures of Cook and La Perouse, while he smoked his pipe, he would have listened with great interest and delight, and have made very pertinent remarks; but he relished oral much better than written narrative. "The puppies," he said, "put their stuff together, o' purpose, in such a way, that no plain man could spell 'em out." And yet he had made young Walpole transform his own log-book in this fashion.

The Governor's favourite print was *Cobbett's Register*, a taste common, I have noticed, among old military men. Cobbett once offended him, by refusing to print his communications; and he dropt the *Register* for two weeks, but on the third gave in. One number served him exactly a week.

Though always rather averse to the society of females, whom he divided into the two grand classes of *white ladies*, and *black wenches*,—the wives of the marines, when abroad, belonging to the former class,—the Governor was compelled to associate with women sometimes, or give up Chatham parties altogether. On trial, he confessed, he rather liked some of the "baggages," particularly those who had "seen service;" and after he had fixed his household, he conceived himself bound in honour to receive the ladies on the occasion of his grand annual dinner; at which periodical festival every point of graciousness and gallantry was shown forth, in the exercise of his duty as a hospitable landlord. All his curious shells and stuffed birds were turned out. The highest-priced tea, the most costly sweetmeats, and the richest cake London could afford, were brought down by himself, to entertain his fair guests, who, he presumed, were all addicted to such dainties. I have seen his temporal arteries start, and his eyes redden, with the force with which, for their entertainment, he poured forth,

Thursday, in the morning, the nineteenth day of May,
For ever be recorded the glorious sixty-two,
Brave Russell did espy before the dawn of day, &c.

At such high tides, black Sam, officiating in his gala costume, of white-muslin trousers and turban, with beads, a scarlet waistcoat, and sky-blue jacket, grinned, with an open-mouthed hospitality, upon the fair guests, and in admiration of his master's wit and humour, that to me gave no small additional relish to the entertainment. Rolling with suppressed laughter at his master's jokes and annual song, he would burst forth with "Bery funny, Massa—Massa Gubbana!" and then, as if afraid of having gone beyond the point of respect before strangers, he would throw down his distended eyelids, "Bery *grand*, Massa, too." Poor fellow, how happy was he then! Was my occasional sickly feeling of pity for his childish mirth, not, after all, misplaced? No one feels compassion in witnessing the exuberant glee and bounding joy of children, and of young frolicsome animals of every kind. Why

regret that Nature's sable family, with the simplest elements of pleasure around them, and its unbroken spring in their hearts, should forget how humiliated they are, and how wretched, reason says, they ought to feel.

The Governor held no maxims of conduct upon which he did not act; and this made me rather wonder why, with his utilitarian notions, he disguised Sam in this fantastic costume at his galas. But besides some particles of latent vanity, or fondness of barbaric pomp, brought from his Government and his days of African splendour, he alleged that monkeys, popinjays, and *niggers*, were meant by Nature to wear yellow, green, and scarlet; and the latter to dance, sing, chatter, and play the bassoon and negro-drum, and cultivate sugar canes for white Christians.

A supplementary, or fragmentary feast, always followed the Governor's annual banquet, which was, in various ways, more interesting than the grander display. It was a true Old English exhibition of beef, beer, and bread, to his various clients in the neighbourhood,—disabled marines, and their dames. Though his house was not often open either to the needy or to the suffering, "who had seen better days," there was a class of persons to whom Governor Fox was nobly liberal — old, infirm paupers, and maimed or blind persons, evidently disqualified to earn their own bread, especially if they had been in service, wounded, and without pensions. They had only to come to him with clean skins, at a reasonable hour, and say they belonged to the Church, to be sure of aid any day, so far as a substantial meal and a few coppers. His locality often swarmed with miserable women, followers of the troops, or soldiers' wives, with a *fry* of half-starved, puny children, to whom his casual bounty was uniformly extended; though, on such occasions, he never failed, for the benefit of society, to deliver the whole sum and substance of the doctrines of Malthus, in a few sweeping and pithy sentences, generally put in the interrogative form, and pronounced with angry emphasis and energy: no matter how public the preaching-place, or who were the auditors. Walking, riding, or driving, the Governor, before distributing his bounty, at the rate of about a penny a-head on the attendant military brood, never failed to halt and rebuke the mother in a few pithy words of Malthusian doctrine. The Governor was, however, in this, quite innocent of plagiary—even the name of the great modern philosopher had never reached his ears, till some years afterwards, when he became a Reformer, and began to study every old soldier's favourite print, *Cobbett's Register*.

This was not until his fortunes had undergone a mortifying change. The fate of the South American speculation may be surmised. He lost every shilling of his "investment." The Scottish Ale Company turned out even worse; but the Drury-Lane shares was the worst concern of all. We were now at the most ticklish time of the war—near its tremendous close. The Funds were tumbling down every day; and in one of the few anxious days that preceded the battle of Waterloo, I saw the Governor arrive very early from Rochester, on foot! in a plight that I shall not easily forget. He came directly to my lodging. He had been on the road from midnight.

"On foot!"

"Ay, and why not?—Is it for beggars to ride a-horseback, sir? Don't you see how those d——d Stocks are tumbling down. Let Master Pitt look up now, I bid him, to his act of 1797—his paper rags. Not but that I could weather it for myself, if the trifle Widow Walpole intrusted to my management, were once secured in hard gold. Thank God, I can handle a pickaxe, a spade, or a skull on the Thames yet;—but a widow, and a gentlewoman, cheated, or bubbled in trusting to Stephen Fox!—all she had scraped up for seven years, to give Ned his schooling, without being beholden to these Northamptonshire Dons, her husband's relations, who have neither conscience nor bowels. —It is enough to drive a man mad."

"You have not *invested* Mrs. Walpole's slender funds, I trust?"

"No!" roared the Governor, "save in those blasted English Funds:—down one-fourth, Friday, down one-sixteenth, Saturday, down one-eighth, yesterday. The vitals are eaten out of Old England by subsidies, loan-contractors, and Jew-jobbers. I have walked up to London, sir, with this hazel-stick in my hand, and a couple of clean shirts, and my Prayer-book, in this bundle, to begin the world again. Can your landlady let me have any dog-hole of a garret at 2s. 6d. a-week, or so. I can't promise more at first. I have written to Bamboo to take the lease of my Box, which he always longed for, and Sam off my hands. An idle man has better chance of a job about London, where there are so many coal-lighters, and so forth, than down yonder."

"Governor Fox, you amaze me!"

"Amazed, to see an old man, a fool, and a beggar! ha! ha! ha! — from having been a credulous idiot!"

There was something terrific in his laugh; but Governor Fox was too firm-spirited long to give way to this wild mood.

"Have I any claim to Chelsea, or Greenwich, think ye? — My pipe is what I shall miss the most, — no luxuries now. I hope the Lord will call me home, however, before old age and frailty drive Stephen Fox on his parish, with all his cousins grinning at the Governor. In the mean time, can your landlady let me have a garret? I must have my billet settled for the night, before I look about me. I can make my own bed, buy and cook my own victuals, wash my own shirt, and keep my place clean myself. You can answer to her, I suppose, that I am a man of sober, regular habits, who attend Church, and pay my way as I go. — I can surely make my bread, were it but selling mackerel, — what the deuce should I let down my heart for?"

Ludicrous as this was, I could not, durst not laugh.

"My dear Governor, though you have had losses and crosses in these evil times, you are certainly exaggerating the tricks of fortune. Depressed as the funds are, you must have, even though selling out to-day, which none but a madman would do, a very comfortable reversion."

"Not a doit! — not a stiver, I believe, will be left; but no matter, I will have, what with the lease, the furniture, my three swords, and gold epaulettes, enough to clear with poor Mrs. Walpole. There's a woman of honour and resolution, sir! saving from her widow's pension; while I have been squandering like an extravagant puppy. It was her duty to be frugal, and she has been so; but how few of the baggages, if at her age, could have been equally resolute: — they must have this gown; and it would not be *decent* to go without that cap — not that they ever care about it — for themselves, — not at all! — Then who the devil does? let them answer that."

I let the Governor divert himself by rambling in this new course, and indulged my private fancies as to the origin of the unusual warmth of his rooted esteem for the widow, who, last night, when he had apprized her of her danger, had behaved, he said, "like a hero, and an angel."

"The general run of womankind would say, 'Oh! the rich relations will surely some time seek after, and educate the boy. I must have this new bonnet, and t'other gim-crack.' Mrs. Walpole has trusted to no such contingency. *Contingency!* do you mark, sir. And what, pray, makes the difference between a man or a woman of sense, and born-idiots, but this same trusting to contingencies; — that the one holds the whip-hand of Fortune, as she has done, and that the other lets the jade drive him, like me.—But having secured my billet for the night, I must be off to my broker. I have written to him by every post: — always *down, down, down*. Last night he rather advises selling. If I have one five guineas, ay, or five shillings, of reversion, after paying my just and lawful debts, by Jove, I'll hoard! I'll lock 'em in my old sea-chest, which I bought when a boy at Halifax, for a dollar and a half. It can now hold all my worldly goods — I must send it up cheap by the wagon.—But I must be off: the broker, that puppy Pantague, urges selling out to-day. Next mail will bring us down, perhaps, a whole per cent — perhaps ten, or blow us out of the water altogether, — who can tell? who can tell? If I had taken Cobbett's advice and warnings now, and laid up a few guineas? — Where is there a Cockney scribbler among them, with their *Times* and their *Chronicles*, ever showed how fast this country is going to the devil, so satisfactorily and clearly as the old Sergeant?"

"Cold comfort that, Governor; but I do insist and entreat, that, before giving Mr. Pantague your final orders, you wait the next mail. London is on the tiptoe of expectation, — good news must come, — worse than our fears have painted cannot arrive. We shall have a rise this morning!"

My persuasions had no effect, which I regretted, as I believed he had received bad, I was unwilling to think sinister, advice from his broker. It was a crisis of fearful excitement, panic, and delusion. Every hour might relieve us from suspense; but then it might be to deepen our loss or sufferings; and I was a fundholder, too. I assured the Governor, in the mean time, that not Nurse Wilks's garret, but the best chamber in her house, and that was my own, was much at his service: but, in the meanwhile, I hoped he could return home in a chaise to-day yet, and sleep on his own bed.

I accompanied the Governor to his destination, though he assured me there was no danger of leaving him alone.

"Your turtle-feeding Aldermen may go

after their lost plums, to feed the great fishes. *I will neither drown like a blind puppy, nor hang myself like a nigger in the sulks.* I can work, sir."

There was already an unusual buzz in the streets. I held the Governor fast by the arm, to detain him a few more minutes from his broker.

"If I were a rich man, Governor, or one whose credit was good, I would, at this moment, underwrite your whole present funded property, as you originally placed it, for five shillings."

"More than it's worth, egad! but let me go, man,—don't you see Pantague signalizing me from his window; there's the carriage coming to convey him to 'Change. *They*'ll ride it out, by Jove! over our necks, whatever becomes of old men, widows, and orphans."

I held him the faster; men, boys, women, were now all hurrying to and fro, or collecting in groups, with eager speech and animated looks, on every side; carriages and horsemen hurried along, some east, some west. News certainly had arrived; express came hot after express; but no bulletin had yet been sent from Downing Street to the City. A dreadful defeat, it was whispered about, had been sustained by the Allies,—the ruin was total,—of Europe, and of Governor Fox. The morning papers were all doubt and mystery.

"Let me off, man,—if I don't sell out today, I may hang myself at night, for I never can face Rochester. They'll be at twenty-five to-morrow. We shall have French assignats for old English guineas, by Jupiter!"

We had something like a struggle when he offered to break off. "Remember, — I protest: — I warn you, for Mrs. Walpole's, for Edward's sake: you are going to throw away her little means, which to-day it is in your power so much to improve, — to ruin absolutely, or deeply injure yourself: you are the dupe of jobbers, — you will curse yourself to-morrow and for ever, if you sell to-day. Did I not plead with you *against* the Scottish Ale Company,—the Drury-Lane Shares,—the South American Speculation.—Hark!" It was the roll of a distant gun: — another, and another. The Governor was a little deaf even then, on one side of the head; but when the rejoicing boom rolled majestically up the river from the Tower guns, there was no longer doubt. The exulting shouts of the gathering multitude, — the outburst of all the bells in London, told the same tale: — a splendid, a decisive victory! The newsmen blew their horns. "Three per cent better already! Hey, Governor!" was my *rising cry to* the now stunned capitalist, — stunned but for five seconds. We went along and heard the first confused tidings of the Field of Waterloo. Eighteen or eight-and-twenty thousand human beings had there bitten the dust,—what an image is that homely one of mortal agony! — and London was in a frenzy of joy, and the funds up, I cannot tell how much, in one hour. What histories were that day in men's faces!

The Governor bore the sudden tide of fortune with entire equanimity. He had been quite ready to take a spade or an oar, and was now equally ready to hire a chaise to go home, to be wiser in future. He thanked me for my counsel, and owned that for once he had done well not to act upon his own judgment — "For why? — he had some knowledge of war, especially with niggers and maroons, and had studied gunnery and fortification; but how could any honest man out of London, though a good marine officer, be up to half the tricks of those stock-jobbing fellows, who ought to have their ears cropped, and be transported, every mother's son of them, as knaves and cozeners?

"Now, mark me, Mr. Richard Taylor; let me only get back my own of them — I scorn a sixpence of their dirty Jew money — and if a guinea is to be bought for twenty-five shillings in England, and a strong-box to lodge it in, by Jove, you shall see if Stephen Fox is to be humbugged a second time by that great humbug, which will burst and go off some morning like the shell of an overcharged bomb. I have a plan in my head—but never mind, — I shall tell you as we go down to Rochester. The only obstacle is Ned, — and the young puppy loves me, and has been bred about my own hand,—a tractable, sharp rascal, and all as one as my own already."

The reader will please to remember that it was with this same "Ned" I sat talking over all these old matters, now suggested by reading the death of the old Governor in the newspaper. In spite of his sincere regret, when we got the length of the Governor's sudden brightening of fortune priming him for matrimony, Mr. Walpole burst into a loud and violent fit of laughter, as the whole scene of the Governor's unpropitious wooing rose to his memory — of the Governor, who always took time by the forelock, arriving at his mother's cottage in full regimentals,

sword, and epaulettes, and heralded by black Sam, on the evening of the same day he had walked to London to *sell out* and seek for honest labour,—his bold, resolute look, as a bachelor of sixty, who had now first screwed his courage to the sticking place, and resolved he would not fail,—and the embarrassment of poor Mrs. Walpole, who was innocent of all design of charming her kind old acquaintance, the friendly Governor, within many degrees of matrimony, and who was now considerably alarmed by her conquest. Yet she had certainly assured him, on the previous evening, "That however low the funds fell, and precious as was her little hoard to her son, she should ever rest fully satisfied that his intentions had been most kind and disinterested. What, after all, was their loss to that of the many anxious, and soon probably to be, the bereaved and sorrowing mothers and wives of England!" When Walpole thought of all this, he laughed outrageously.

How she contrived to reject without mortally offending her admirer, I cannot tell,—neither could Master Ned, Black Sam, nor Hannah the housemaid, who had taken their station in one listening group, without the parlour door, to overhear the Governor's declaration in form. "A parson," the Governor used to say, "could not have put it into prettier language."

"It was exceedingly impertinent in me, I own," said Walpole; "for I was then a shrewd boy, and the negro and the girl little better than idiots; but somehow, though my own mother was concerned, the temptation was irresistible. The comical face of Sam alone,—who was grinning from ear to ear, rubbing his hands, half-dancing through the kitchen, and singing extemporaneously, in negro fashion,

Pretty Missey Walpool,
Marry ould Massa Gubanna;
Him be a crusty ould fellow,
And Massa Neddy's pappa,

—was it not enough to plead for me, a fun-loving lad of fourteen.—Poor old fellow! but among all these odd legacies of his—very odd for him, certainly,—£200 to the Ladies' Tract Society; £500 for the Wesleyan Missions;—(How the Saints have got about him at last!)—£150 to the Society for Preventing Cruelty to Animals, &c. &c.—who, I wonder, is to be the happy legatee of Sam Dixon, a black man of the Sow-Sow nation? If Charlotte would not be dreadfully shocked by his hideous ugliness, which soon wears off, I would be so happy to receive poor Sam under my own roof; and you know how handy and trustworthy a fellow he is—how much worth his board and wages to any family;—suppose the idea were to come from you?"

I liked the notion of conspiring against my niece with her future husband, in her own house,—which she had as yet only seen about half-a-dozen times, under my escort, and strictly *incognita*,—and took it up at once.

"If Sam does not whine to death, like a faithful spaniel, on his master's grave, I give you joy of so excellent a domestic; though hardly yet can I believe this printed *will* authentic,—£1500 for the conversion of the Jews!—Perfectly preposterous! or else our old friend has gone delirious on his death-bed."

The rapid drawing up of a carriage—a thundering peal at the house-door, and the loud, hale, clear tones of the old Governor burst on our admiring ears! We were down stairs in a moment. Walpole could not have given his bride a warmer—he might a gentler, welcome. He absolutely hugged the old Governor, who hugged "Ned" in turn.

"So you saw the puppies had killed me off, and made my will, too,—and be cursed to their impudence! £150 to the Ladies' Tract Society!—Did ye note that?—Mr. Richard, my service to ye; here's a hand for you, too. It's all an election *rouse*, man."

This was a frequent lingual slip of the Governor's, among others;—he meant *ruse*; and the substantial meaning is so much the same, that the mistake is scarcely worth noticing.

"An electioneering *rouse*, sir, put out by some of the editor puppies on the Bamboo interest."

"My dear Governor—you a candidate for Parliament—seriously?—And opposed to Colonel Bamboo?"

"Why, ay. Is it so wonderful now, that a man, a bachelor, without chick or child, should throw away a few thousands to be something of a patriot. Don't you see, Wellington is driving the nation to the dogs, four-in-hand? They'll let up the Papists in Ireland to cut all Protestant throats; they'll let loose the niggers; they won't take off the malt-tax; they won't give us gold for the paper-rags;—they make the loaf double price, as I'm told, to the poor man. I'll have down the loaf; all the commons restored, and the bypaths opened; poor men shall

brew their own beer, and make their own soap, without taxes and gaugers. The fat parsons get too much, I begin to think. Oh! you shall see how I will lay about me, and pull up pensioners and all, once I get into the House; and I'm told it won't cost much above £3000 altogether. Those newspaper coxcombs at Rochester, who never have room to take up my ideas when I write them, will be glad to print my speeches."

Walpole and myself were struck dumb at first. A sharking attorney, the agent of a more sharking Jew boroughmonger, who looked round and sold to the highest bidder, had been practising on our single-minded unsuspicious friend, who was supposed much richer than he really was. He made no secret of the affair. He was to be supported against Bamboo, who wished to come in on what he called the liberal interest; though so far as his medley of political notions could be comprehended, the Governor was out of sight the more liberal of the two. We knew the nature of our pig too well to try at once to unship him, by pulling him backwards.

"The gallant member for *Chewsburgh* on his legs," cried Walpole. "*Hear! hear!*"

The Governor chuckled involuntarily.

"The Colonial Office fellows will deign me a reply to my memorials then, perhaps," he said.

"Rather inaudible in the gallery,—*Loud laughter*,— cries of *Question! Question!* through all parts of the House," continued Walpole.

"The Parliament puppies can be cursed impertinent I know; but that don't frighten me, let me alone to manage 'em. I won't be browbeat. Have I not drilled marines, and harangued the native chiefs before now? It must be your business, Mr. Richard, to get me fairly reported. Those reporter whelps, I'm told, play the deuce with a new member where they take a spite."

"I have no doubt, Governor, but that you will be a prodigious favourite with all the reporters. An honest man with a new face has a great chance with them,—were it only for the novelty. How I shall long to read your maiden speech!"

The Governor laughed again with irrepressible glee.

The Jews were to have his money any way. If not for their conversion, then for his own victimizing.

"The newspapers," continued he, "with their usual impudence, will, no doubt, be saying, Ned there makes my speeches for me. I'll have them know that Stephen Fox, as an independent member of Parliament, will take his lesson of no man."

"Jealous of me, Governor?" said Walpole.

"No Ned;—but you must not come near me for three months or so after I'm in. The fellows about Brookes's, and the United Service puppies, will swear Ned Walpole has primed the old Governor. So I'll make no fine Latin speeches, d'ye mark?—but just take my post somewhere against a pillar, like Joseph Hume, and give it 'em *hot and hot* every night of the week; and, egad, if I don't pepper 'em! Now, Ned, if you need a frank or so for your *mother*, you know where that worthy lady has a friend."

Mr. Walpole and I exchanged looks. How was this moonstruck madness to be stayed?

All the address of Mr. Walpole and myself could not break off the negotiation proceeding under such "favourable auspices," between the agent of the Jew boroughmonger and our friend Governor Fox. He would be in Parliament. He had set his heart upon it. He would reform many abuses, and remove numerous grievances; make a great figure, do a prodigious quantity of good to the poor, the Church, and the Marine Service; and, above all, defeat Colonel Bamboo, whose cool effrontery, as he conceived it, in opposing him, after eating his curries and drinking his Madeira for so many years, provoked him to the highest degree. It was a breach of every law of hospitality and good-fellowship,—almost a personal affront. An electioneering attorney could not have desired a more hopeful subject. The Governor was wound up to the pitch of carrying on the war with spirit, and spending half his fortune in the contest; and I don't know how it is, but this fever of election excitement is wonderfully catching. We who had begun by strenuous opposition, first covert, and then avowed—seeing better might not be, at last lent ourselves heartily to the "Fox interest." Even in their honeymoon,—the last week of it however,—Walpole was penning electioneering squibs, and Charlotte making up Fox favours of navy blue and red; while I worked hard in the Governor's committee, principally, I confess, as a check upon the lavish expenditure incurred in every quarter. I was resolved that, in the first place, he should pay as cheaply as possible for his whistle; and next, that he should have skill to play it, so far as that art might be speedily imparted by his friends. With the requisite

physical energy, lungs, and wind, he was largely endowed.

Though, as a rational reformer, I am bound to hope that, in the enlightened progress of society, canvassing, and, much more, *bribing* an English elector, will soon be accounted as profligate and scandalous as it would at present be to canvass or bribe a British judge, I must confess, that there is something wonderfully exhilarating to "corrupt human nature" in the bustle of a canvass, when any thing like the show of freedom of choice remained among the great body of the voters. Now, our borough, though as corrupt as any one subsequently placed in the purgatory of schedule B., was not quite sunk into the torpor of those which afterwards found a place in schedule A. With Chewsburgh it was universal gangrene, but not yet absolute putrefaction of the whole parts.

We carried through our man with great *eclat*, though protests were taken by the other candidate against so many of our votes, that, if one-third of the exceptions held good, it was clear the Governor must be unseated. Of this consequence he had no adequate notion. He was told he was the sitting member for Chewsburgh! He was in extravagant spirits, and the hurry and bustle of the affair left him no leisure to think of the bill of costs: —

"Then comes the reckoning when the feast is o'er."

But we were still at the banquet.

After our candidate had foundered in several set speeches penned for him by the attorney and by Walpole, when fairly driven to his own natural eloquence, quickened by passion, his addresses made such an impression upon the John Bulls of all complexions, collected in front of his rostrum, (the balcony, over the porch of the inn,) that had the market people been voters, we would certainly have carried the Governor by acclamation, in the teeth of the professedly liberal candidate. The hearty cheering of the crowd produced a wonderful effect on the spirits of the orator. I have never yet seen a man more elated for the moment by that intoxicating incense, that true laughing gas, —

"The fickle reek of popular breath."

It is true, strong and sound as his brains were, he was late in life of first inhaling it.

"And if I speak here in open day to the satisfaction of 500 honest chaw-bacons and smock-frocks, and 150 men in broad-cloath, why may'nt I to the 100 honest independent members in St. Stephen's Chapel, with the 300 humbugs, and the rest of the jackanapes, the surtout and mustachio sprigs of quality fellows to boot of 'em! Let me alone. I have hit the nail on the head at last."

"I was always certain Governor Fox would make a most useful and distinguished member of the House of Commons," said the attorney. "And unless he had possessed extraordinary mental and moral qualifications, I never ——"

My most frequent and peaceful mode of rebuke is to interrupt the speaker: — "I have not the least doubt," I observed, "but that the Governor will be sufficiently distinguished, were it but for that rare quality of straight-forward, blunt sincerity."

There was but one drawback to the *eclat* of our election: though Bamboo was hissed to our hearts' content, the few favourable symptoms of a riot, which broke out at the close of the poll, soon died away, and the tremendous crash which made the eyes of our new-made legislator twinkle and brighten, as he hastened to the window, proved, on investigation, to be nothing more than a lawful, though rough hammering down of the polling-booth. The smashing of the windows of Bamboo's inn, on the opposite side of the market-place — the committee-room of the *Yellows* — would, I believe, have done the Governor more good than his own apotheosis of chairing, which, however, he enjoyed immensely. Though not fond of expense, I am sure he would have willingly paid the broken glass, and plastered the broken heads out of his own pocket, to have had his true old English revenge on his rival complete. He affected none of the hand-shaking, complimentary magnanimity of these silken times. He owned, or rather he proclaimed, that he hated Bamboo like the devil, and wished him to lose above all things. Though bound by the duties and decorums of an infant law-maker, I fancied a tone of reproach in his remark to Mr. Walpole, when all was over, "that Englishmen had lost half their spirit at elections."

And now all was undeniably over, and the new Member had written franks for every body around him. Beginning, as a mark of high distinction, with Mrs. Walpole, dowager, he left not off till mine host of the Red Dragon, and even *Boots* himself, was supplied with one frank for his mother, and another, I dare say, for his sweetheart. The Governor's bounty in franking was boundless.

The Bill of the Red Dragon was still to pay, and the new Member had never left any house of public reception with his bill un-

settled, in his life. Red Dragon preferred settling with the agent, according to the ancient and approved custom of all elections in Chewsburgh — whether contested or not. It was, indeed, with some reason that the landlord persisted in refusing to tender his bill, pleading want of time, where there were so many *trifling* items to enter; as I have little doubt that our new law-maker, on its presentation, would have furnished him with a few more—such as "To one broken head," or "To a kicking down my own stairs," had it been tendered on the spot. I cannot tell to how much the Jew agent's per centage on the whole amount might come: but I recollect that one item of the bill, of many folio sheets in length, was £764, 11s. 3½d. for chaise-hire for bringing in the out-voters. Brandy and water furnished to the committee-room alone, independently of soups, sandwiches, lunches, wine, wax-tapers, &c. &c. &c., came to above £240 during our one week's labour. At that awful reckoning, the settling of which took place some months afterwards, I still recollect the sneaking look and whining tone of the country attorney, while he addressed the rampant Governor in these words,—"But the *duty*, my dear sir—you don't consider the heavy duty on brandies, Governor, with the expense of the victuallers' license, sir, and the house-tax, and window-tax, which, on the Red Dragon, amount to a heavier annual sum than the corresponding taxes on the noblest mansions in the county —to double of that, indeed."

"You are telling me a cursed lie," cried the furious Governor, "when you tell me that that paltry inn—but it's a good enough inn — but that that paltry fellow pays half, or fiftieth as much house-tax as is paid for B—— Castle."

The man appealed to me; and I believed this part of his statement, at least, extremely probable, though I was prepared to deny that these premises warranted the sweeping conclusions of Red Dragon's bill. When the attorney had been summarily dismissed, with a peremptory assurance that, until the bill was cut down two-thirds, not a sixpence would be forthcoming, the Governor reverted to the subject.

"£240 for brandy and water, and refreshments! — how much is the water a quart in the Red Dragon? Heard you ever, Mr. Richard, of such an extortioning rascal? Why, every man of the six of ye might have been kept royally drunk, from morn to night, for a month, upon £40 worth of real Nantes. 'But the *duty*, my dear sir,'" he continued, with an air of mimicking the attorney. "And what the deuce *is* the duty?"

"What would reduce the brandy charged in your bill to at least one fourth of its price — the duty is, at present, about 22s. 6d. a gallon."

"The deuce it is! I knew it was damnable upon Schiedam, or old Jamaica rum either. The doctors ordered brandy for old Stokes of the artillery, and Geneva toddy for Lieutenant Denovan of the Invalids; but they, poor fellows, can't afford it—that's hard now. Though old Jamaica rum be, out of sight, a sounder, better liquor than either, the brandy and Scheidam were to them in the nature of medicine. I understand I am paying more than treble price here for Leeward Island rum which I did abroad for Jamaica — the primest. That is harder still; and the Yankees getting it as cheap as ditch-water. Why the devil, can you tell me, have we Englishmen not our own rums, and sugars, and teas, as cheap as the Dutch and the Yankees?"

"It will be your duty, as a Member of Parliament, to inquire into that."

"And that it will; and, what is more, I'll do it. I know, though, it is quite right not to let good British gold go to our natural enemies, the dancing, capering Monsheers, or to the greedy Dutchmen, with their big breeches: — I suppose it is for that they tax Geneva and brandy so cruelly; but old Jamaica rum, made in our own colonies, by our own niggers, for the benefit of our own planters——"

"That makes a difference to be sure; but not so much, either, to men like poor dyspeptic Stokes or Denovan—liking better pure brandy and Schiedam-punch, or requiring them for cure or comfort, and too poor to purchase solace or healing, in consequence of the high rate of our taxation."

"But you see it is to keep our gold out of the pockets of the French and the Dutch, who fit out fleets and armies against us, and fight us with our own cash."

"Or pour it into the pockets of those not much nearer and dearer to us than the Gauls and Batavians. Is it not folly, think you, Governor, for a man to punish himself in the first place that he may annoy his neighbour in the second, admitting that such annoyance were justifiable at all, or that we had power to inflict it? The man must have a large stomach for revenge who does so. Would you not think him a fool?"

"One must do a great deal for the good of one's native country, Mr. Richard."

"Granted. If the real good of Old England requires that, though preferring or requiring foreign spirits, we should, nevertheless, poison ourselves with villanous English gin, I am too good a patriot to object. If for the national good, set the ten thousand casks abroach, — let them —

For ever dribble out their base contents,
Touched by the Midas finger of the State,
Bleed gold for Ministers to sport away.
Drink and be *poisoned*; 'tis your country bids.
Gloriously drunk, obey the important call:
Her cause demands the assistance of your throats, —
Ye all can swallow, and she asks no more."

The Governor had scarcely patience to hear me out. "This is some of the piperly stuff of your snivelling poets, or Temperance Society fellows."

"No such thing, — at any rate the words are used by me only as a plea for better tipple. I avow I see no means of putting an end to gin-drinking, half so effectual, as allowing people to have *cheaply*, good rum, Hollands, and brandy, with food, shelter, and clothing. These are my engines for putting an end to intemperance.—But this abominable bill!" I took up that of the Red Dragon, which, if laid on end, would have extended over all its mazy passages.

"What withheld me yet, Mr. Richard, from kicking that rascally attorney down stairs, when he dared say to my face, that his Grace the Duke of ——, pays less house-tax for B—— Castle, than that cheating fellow, his employer, lately the butler of a small squire, for his paltry inn?"

"First, my dear Governor, because kicking — save duns — is not a parliamentary privilege; and lastly, because, I dare say, you suspect that the statement may be quite true."

"What, sir! the Duke of —— pay no more house-tax than a paltry tavern-keeper, in a country town! It would be a manifest affront put upon the old nobility of England to let them pay no more."

"Ay, Governor; yet that noble Duke, and also he of Leeds, and Newcastle, and Devonshire, and Marlborough, and Northumberland, and Grafton, and Buckingham, and the whole ducal bead-roll, pay at the same rate. It is marvellous with what good grace their Graces submit very gracefully to the affront of paying a very small share, or *none*, of the national reckoning."

"Now, arn't you joking with me, Mr. Richard?"

"Never was more serious in my life. This is a fact so notorious, that even a new member of Parliament might know it. How much house-duty do you pay at Rochester?"

"Why, about £12. I appealed, to be sure, but the rascals showed me an Act of Parliament for it; and I appealed, also, against £2, 19s. or something that way, which they charged Mrs. Walpole for her small cottage, —the lubberly fellows! plundering widow women, living barely on their small pensions; but that was for her windows, too, — and indeed the rickety brick and plaster tenement, which I could have pushed over with a good drive of my shoulder, was not worth more than that sum of rent."

I inquired what several other of his friends and neighbours paid, and was satisfactorily answered. They were all charged the full amount exigible on their rent,—and that rent highly, if not exorbitantly rated. My brother's house-tax, for a house in London, rated at £300 a-year, was above forty guineas.

"Well, my brother pays this. His house is, to be sure, dear-rented from its locality, — now what pays Euston Hall, one seat of the Duke of Grafton?"

"What! the show-place — the place we see in the pictures?"

"The same."

"Why, a good round number of hundreds, I'll be sworn."

"What pays Blenheim, the Marlborough family's place,—you have seen Blenheim?—or what Nottingham Castle, the pride of the Newcastles?"

"A swingeing sum, I guess,—if Mr. James Taylor pays above forty guineas for his house in town, and myself £12 for my box at Rochester."

"Why, £14 for Euston Hall, and ditto for the Duke of Newcastle's stronghold."

"By the Lord Harry, you don't say it! Well, there is work ready cut out for me. — If I don't affront them, from Land's End to Berwick-upon-Tweed, and make 'em table their coins, call me a crop-ear. Why the deuce don't the Dukes and Lords pay fair down, like other honest householders?"

"Affront them! poh, poh. That is not so easily done."

"You may say that, any way, of those who have their lady mothers and dowager grandmothers pensioners; though their husbands, perhaps, never saw more service than a review day at Hounslow, — or in camp on the Sussex coast played at soldiers. Why, they are meaner beggars than a hobnail's gammer in the work-house, for she would not

be there if her son had wherewithal to keep her out."

"With this additional circumstance of aggravation, that the honest chaw-bacon is so cruelly taxed in his basket and his store, for the benefit of the grandee parties, that he is rendered totally unable to support his own mother."

"Now you are at that bread-tax again. It is all puzzle-work that to me, though I see no business an industrious free-born Englishman has to pay more for his loaf than a Frenchman or a Hollander."

"Or to be tied up from buying where he can find bread, or what is the same thing, bread-corn, best and cheapest?"

"By Jove not—certainly not! Why should he?"

"Why, because landlords must be able to clear their mortgage interest, and maintain their splendour; and don't know else how to set about it."

"Why the deuce do people let 'em?—They shan't pay out of my pocket, though."

"Nor out of the pockets of your constituents, if you can help it?"

"My constituents! You know that is all humbug; but why should bread and meat be dearer than it was when I was a boy? That's the question. One of the first things I remember was my father speaking about the Hanoverian rats, and Walpole, who brought in the excise and the tax on beer; I'll have off all that;—but what, now, in my place, Mr. Richard, would be the first thing you would broach in the House? A bill to burn all these spinning-jennies, which spin the Peels and Arkwrights into fine estates, while Englishmen are working for them upon potatoes and water-gruel?—The threshing-machines, too, which take the work out of the poor labourers' teeth, and send them to the work-house?"

I shook my head.

"I'll be hanged now, sir, if I know what you would be at. Well, if we may'nt burn 'em, what say you to taking the owners bound, that no Englishman shall be thrown out of bread on this account. When you knock up any office, you always pension off the fellow that held it, and call that only justice, since you take away his employment; and what is more, I will hear nothing of the machines, unless they come bound to afford the men working them, fire, food, and clothing, as Englishmen should. You are shaking your wise pate again;—do I ask what is unreasonable?"

"Only impracticable, I fear."

"My next bill shall be to make every body go to church, which you must own will be a vast saving in point of economy, besides promoting piety and good discipline,—no straggling after Methodists, and Ranters, and Anabaptist fellows,—no good in paying twice over; first to the parson, which they must do any way, and then to the chapel, for their whims. There will be a good swingeing saving at once."

"There are two ways of accomplishing this:—pay him only whose services you require."

"What, sir?"

"I say that I agree with you:—once paying the parson is quite enough; but let it be him you pay, by whom you wish to be served. There are two ways, you see, of accomplishing your excellent, economical object. If every man pay only for the religious ministry he approves, there will be no double-payment, and consequently no hardship."

"You are at that puzzle-work again. Don't you see, man, that the landlords and farmers are bound to pay the parsons to preach in church to the poor people; so why need they tax and starve themselves to keep up Methodist chapels?"

With all this, and though the Governor's repugnance to the "snivelling, canting Methodist fellows" never was fully conquered, he was more easily brought to see that tithes, and every kind of church revenues, were national property, than if born heir to the advowson of a good benefice or two. Still he was sadly perplexed—for as yet he had little more knowledge of any public principle, or political question, than ninety of the hundred of the young, or even the middle-aged gentlemen, at that time chosen members of the Honourable House.

Though I failed in most other points, probably from attempting too much at once, I succeeded completely in demonstrating to my pupil the propriety and necessity of a free trade in the first necessaries of life. It was a proof of the integrity of his mind, and the singleness of his heart, that he believed the landed proprietors of Great Britain only required to have the same facts clearly set before them, to cease from grinding their fellow-subjects by a monopoly for which posterity must think with contempt of the men of the nineteenth century, who endured it so long, after fully perceiving its iniquity. The Governor came to know them better; but unfortunately he never found an oppor-

tunity of entering the lists for the labourer, against, as he said, those who thrust their greedy fingers into his dish; and who, for every slice of his loaf that went to feed his children, subtracted a half one, or what was equal its value, for their own benefit. The Governor had only spoken once in the House — though he voted stanchly *against* Catholic Emancipation, and *for* the abolition of the duty on Baltic timber — when an election committee, after all fitting deliberation, the examination of a host of witnesses, and numerous reports, declared his election void! Bamboo was the sitting member, — and the bill of the Red Dragon was yet unsettled!

The poor Governor! I give myself praise for the long-suffering with which I bore his transports of rage at first, and his sallies of temper long afterwards. A bilious attack ended in a violent fever, which acted as a counter-irritant in mitigation of the worst symptoms. To save the patient from a fatal relapse, Mr. Walpole, during his recovery, parried the attacks of Red Dragon, and, afterwards, by threatening Jew, agent, and landlord with exposure, effected a considerable deduction from the bill of election expenses.

The final settlement left our old friend minus £5700, a considerable quantity of black bile, and all the fragments of his honest prejudices for merry Old England. This affair brought the infirmities of old age with rapid strides upon the Governor. At the commencement of the canvass, though verging on fourscore, Governor Fox looked more like a hale man of sixty-five; but a painful change was now perceptible. He never fully recovered his flesh, or former toughness. Toughness, rather than mere strength, had been alike his physical and spiritual quality; and though,

"Even in his ashes lived their wonted fires,"

it was easy to perceive that gradual decrepitude of mind was to be the sure attendant of an enfeebled frame. The Governor was stimulated to a desperate rally. The cause I proceed to relate.

During any of his previous attacks of illness, which though, like every thing about him, violent, were unfrequent, Mrs. Walpole had acted the intelligent, friendly woman's part, in the bachelor establishment. It was she that counselled and directed Black Sam, and saw that the nurse rigidly obeyed the instructions of the Baptist apothecary, whose long bills the Governor never would have paid unaudited, save that the infallible "Widow Walpole,"—who, he knew, would do every thing that was good for him, except marrying him—had called in the objectionable satellite of Esculapius. Great gossip as the Public or the World is, in Rochester as every where else, she had never either smiled, sneered, or surmised aught evil or amiss of Mrs. Walpole's friendly attentions to the insulated old bachelor. The lady, it was known, neither wanted a husband for herself, nor, now at least, a legacy for her prosperous son. But when the Governor was seized with the election-fever, of which many as strong men have died, Mrs. Walpole was making a distant and long visit to an early friend; and her post by the Governor's bedside, was usurped by a lady of very different character.

When I first saw Miss Catherine Chadleigh, at a military ball, she might have been about thirty-six, though she was still what is called "a remarkably handsome woman." She was the eldest of the five daughters of a half-pay lieutenant of foot, who, in consequence of severe wounds received in India, had early obtained retirement, and now held a small office in the public works at Chatham. The whole family, parents and children, were strikingly *military* in tastes, manners, habits, morals: — gay to levity, fond of show, and, above all, wonderfully skilled in the art of maintaining a dashing exterior on very slender means. The ladies among the Rochester and Stroud civilians could not comprehend their economy. It was a constant, enduring theme of wonder. It appeared to them, at tea-table calculations, that the whole income of Lieutenant — in common parlance Captain—Chadleigh, was not enough to keep his beautiful girls in slippers and sashes. How clean cards, wax-lights, and refreshments were afforded for the frequent evening parties he gave the officers, was a deeper mystery; but it was understood that among the many accomplishments of the Chadleigh family was dexterous play. Even the youngest girl — Chatti, she of thirteen — was more than a match at *ecarté*, loo, *vint-et-une*, brag, &c. &c. &c., for any lately-joined officer of engineers — not to speak of fledgling ensigns and raw lieutenants. Yet there was no unfair play — no high stakes — all was superior knowledge and dexterity; and the young men were contented to lose a trifle in the evenings to the fair and elegant creatures who graced their morning promenade, sang duets with them, or were their partners in the carpet dance. Mrs. Chadleigh contrived that it should be a difficulty, and reckoned

a favour, as it certainly was an enjoyment, to the young subalterns, to be admitted to her tea and card parties. Though it was doubtful to the Chatham ladies whether any of the girls would "settle to advantage," it was quite clear that each might, without much difficulty, "scamble up some sort of husband" from among the corps after corps of officers, which this transport station, and the frequent changes during the war, threw in their way. The eldest — the most beautiful and the most admired woman of the really handsome family, remained the doubtful case. Three of the younger girls had married under twenty; the respective matrimonial prizes being a lieutenant of marines, an assistant surgeon, and a purser in the navy. Chatti, always celebrated as the cleverest girl of the set, caught a captain of engineers. These were small doings in the eyes of Miss Chadleigh. The homage of successive generations of military men had done less to swell her pride, and stimulate her ambition, than the idle patronage, or friendship, as it was called, of a lady of quality, the wife of a retired colonel in the neighbourhood, who, in her comparative solitude and imaginary poverty, found the society, accomplishments, and flattery of a pretty young woman, with whom she needed to be on no ceremony, a relief from the tedium of Chatham life. Lady Louisa paid Miss Chadleigh attentions which the four younger Miss Chadleighs considered quite enviable. Lady Louisa drove her friend on airings in her pony phaeton,—invited her to spend days, and finally weeks and months at her house, — presented her with showy dresses, and enriched her with cast-off trinkets and other faded relics of her own past age of beauty and belleship. She did more: she introduced her favourite to the Colonel's ancient friends and dinner guests, several of whom might have been considered "a great catch,"—Governor Fox being then esteemed the worst *parti* on the veteran list. But Miss Chadleigh was yet far off from what the ladies call "Last Prayers." She was still a youthful ambitious beauty, — the Governor a cross, vulgar, old bore; and the nephew of Lady Louisa, the Honourable George Tynwald, a late Etonian, a favourite at Windsor, second son of an Earl, and a newly-joined cornet in the Guards, surpassed every other cornet in every desirable quality she had ever imagined of man or boy:—he was but nineteen;—it was his only fault. True, he was poor, and Miss Chadleigh knew all the unpleasant attendants on genteel or titled poverty, — but then the family had interest: — and there never yet was real cause to fear that the second son of an Earl, so closely connected with many noble families and government people, as was the Honourable George, would ever suffer real want. Lady Louisa and the Colonel, for example, were miserably *poor;* yet they kept a handsome establishment of servants and horses,—a good table,—a pony phaeton, —saw company, and made visits and excursions.

Miss Chadleigh, at twenty-five, wanted not for prudence; yet the poverty of an Earl's daughter-in-law presented nothing to alarm the daughter of Lieutenant Chadleigh. Then Lady Louisa, and the other noble relatives of the Honourable George, might be as indignant as they chose, — but they must be forced to acknowledge that love only — pure, disinterested, resistless passion—had been her sole motive in one night packing up the coral necklaces and bracelets, and Roman pearls, with which her hostess had enriched her, and stealing through the shrubbery of the Lodge to where the chaise waited, under the shade of a row of poplars, with the impatient lover. The young cornet's servant, a party to the enterprise, imagined that, in playing the lady false, he would best serve himself, and also his boyish master; who, he perceived, had become rather alarmed at the length to which the affair had got, and doubtful whether he had any true vocation at this time to a Scottish matrimony. It was not wholly for nothing that the honourable George had cost his noble father £2000 at Eton. There undoubtedly is superiority in well-cultivated masculine intellect. At nineteen, the Etonian fairly outwitted a practised coquette of twenty-five, — at least all the Chatham ladies whispered as much; and it was certain that, on the third day, the lingering runaway lovers allowed themselves to be overtaken near Nottingham, on their desultory progress northwards.

At this time, no mercy was shown to Miss Chadleigh; though from ten to fifteen years afterwards, the ladies declared, almost unanimously, that Major General Tynwald *ought* to have married Catherine Chadleigh, instead of his cousin. Until that marriage took place, Miss Chadleigh,—no longer the young and beautiful, but still the *wonderfully* handsome Miss Chadleigh, whose charms had been celebrated and toasted wherever British keels plough the sea, or the Union Jack flies, and British swords hew their way to victory,—

had not wholly despaired, or had not formed any decided plan. If any matrimonial overtures had been cogitated, in the meanwhile, by transient admirers, one class of charitable female friends were ever ready to suggest, that after her disappointnent with Captain, Major, and, latterly, General Tynwald, Miss Chadleigh, they were sure, would never marry; and another set, more frank and more sagacious, repeated the old sentence of condemnation on the treacherous juvenile lover, who *ought* to have married. The opinions at mess were still more decided.

Time, which had ripened Miss Chadleigh into a most beautiful and lovely girl, next into a *remarkably* handsome woman of thirty, and then into a still *wonderfully* handsome woman of thirty-eight, had made Lady Louisa an aged and widowed card-playing dowager, approaching seventy, and patched up a truce between her and her early favourite, after many years of hatred and estrangement. They were necessary to each other; and Mrs. Chadleigh could well spare from her humble home, her ambitious, chagrined, and now fearfully-tempered daughter, who vented upon her poor mother the misanthropic hatred and wrath, inspired by recent disappointments, deserved and wholly self-incurred, but not the less bitter and rankling to a proud and imperious mind thwarted in all its hopes and affections. Between this lady and Governor Fox there had been almost open feud in the early period of their acquaintance; and, indeed, my frank friend had said every where, from the first, that Chadleigh should marry off his handsome girls as fast as possible, for they would assuredly go to the dogs else; especially Miss Kate, who, at the game of ambitious matrimony, would find young ladies were as apt to be tricked as young lords.

Though the lady had cheated him, or something like it, at cards, by her dexterous and rapid play, and ridiculed him almost to his face, for the amusement of Lady Louisa, the Governor did not exult long nor immoderately in the downfal of the ambitious project of Miss Chadleigh. A part of the wrath of his naturally candid mind was even directed against the stripling lover, of whose heartlessness and juvenile depravity of mind he spoke in terms that produced a rupture of some years' duration with the Lady Louisa. However, in the rapid succession of Chatham inhabitants, the "old familiar faces" drew together again.

The Dowager Lady Louisa, and Miss Chadleigh, at last, self-invited, honoured the Governor's annual high banquet by their presence; and he was occasionally seen at the card-tables of the Lodge, losing a few crowns, he knew not well how, but with tolerably good grace. But the first hearty reciprocation of regard arose out of the affair of Black Sam. Both ladies were violently of the Governor's faction, and both proclaimed it; and the satire and mimickry which Miss Chadleigh indulged against their mutual enemies, the *She-Saints*, captivated his whole heart. Her witticisms were reported by him at the Mess as faithfully as they had ever been in her most brilliant days by her young military adorers. When the Governor met Miss Chadleigh shopping, he now gave her his arm home to the Lodge gate, and sometimes thought himself bound in politeness to stay dinner or even to return to tea, if Lady Louisa vouchsafed graciously to invite him. At charity-balls and fancy-fairs, he became their approved squire. When rallied by the other veterans on the apparent flirtation, the Governor—such is the latent vanity of man's heart — would chuckle aloud, and take as a personal compliment such sayings, as, "What would Kate Chadleigh have taken twenty years back to have been seen on the promenade *beaued* by old Governor Fox!" His turn was come then; the proud beauty, now no longer young, though still so *wonderfully* handsome, and in such brilliant preservation, had come down a peg,—had descended to his level, — would be glad, perhaps, to accept of him, — no saying! The Governor repressed the soft idea; but when any of his dowager friends hinted that it was believed a fixed thing, he only laughed the louder.

Mrs. Walpole, the most charitable, the mildest and kindest of womankind, at last thought it necessary to hint danger. It was upon a visit which Edward and I made her on a Saturday, a few weeks before we heard the false report of the Governor's death, that she first spoke.

"The death of Lady Louisa will leave Miss Chadleigh, with her habits, a very helpless woman," said she, considerately; "unless, indeed, there be any serious intention of matrimony entertained by our old friend."

"No fear, mother," cried Walpole. "I know what you mean now,—that Miss Chadleigh is likely to entrap the old Governor; but no fear of him. He would as soon think of marrying Tippoo's mother, if there be in existence such a lady. He will die as he has lived, your single-minded, unwedded adorer:—

No maid will owe her scathe to him,—
He never loved but you."

"Don't be so absurd, Edward, unless you wish to affront me.—I do not blame his attentions, if the genuine motive of them be clear to Miss Chadleigh. From her, one would believe, that he certainly entertains a serious design of proposing for her, were Lady Louisa,—whom she ostentatiously affects that she never will leave,—removed."

"A trick to neutralize you, mother. I do believe she imagines you will have the Governor yet."

Mrs. Walpole was now really offended. "I will hold no more discourse on this subject with you, Edward. I only wished the Governor's friends to comprehend, that whether such a marriage were likely to conduce to his happiness and respectability or not, it may very probably be brought about. Half Chatham believes it a settled thing."

"And laughs accordingly.—No, no, mother. I can't give my consent. Let him make Miss Kate his heir, if he chooses, to what reasonable or unreasonable extent seems to him good; but he shan't marry her, I promise you, if I can help it."

The Governor dined with us on that day, as he always did when Mr. Walpole visited his mother.

In the morning we had met him, the walking military escort of the pony phaeton in which Miss Chadleigh slowly drove the fat, arm-chair Lady Louisa. The exceeding graciousness of the younger lady to Walpole, who had never been a favourite, was a suspicious circumstance. She even manœuvred that we should both be invited to the card party at the Lodge on the same evening, which we however declined.

I have said the Governor dined with us. Immediately after Mrs. Walpole left the dining-room, we began our concerted plan of operation. It is told, that a maiden lady of fourscore, on being asked at what age a woman ceases to think of marriage, candidly told the interrogator, he must apply to an older woman than herself. The age at which an old man's vanity, in affairs regarding the sex, becomes extinct, is equally dubious. The Governor, when rallied on his conquest, and the prevalent rumours in the Chatham circles, seemed highly gratified and flattered, though he became at last angry to perceive that we could seriously believe he entertained the remotest idea that he intended to marry any one, and least of all Miss Chadleigh, however willing she might be in the humility of two score, to accept of his fortune and his hand.

"No, no," was his final answer. "Kate and I know each other too well. One house would never hold us."

The prospect of Governor Fox getting into Parliament, had quickened Miss Chadleigh's operations. During the canvass, Lady Louisa died suddenly of apoplexy, leaving her funded property to her "beloved nephew," the Major-General, and her *wardrobe* to her "dear companion and domestic friend, Miss Catherine Chadleigh." I shall not attempt to paint the rage of the proud, disappointed, and betrayed woman; for the old lady whose humours she had so long borne, and whose household she had superintended, an unpaid servant, had often in the lulls following a squall, assured her that her interests were not overlooked.

The letter addressed by the agent of the principal legatee and sole executor, the once Honourable George, to his aunt's companion, his own early true-love, contained as polite a turning-out-of-doors as could well be couched in ten lines of English. It was delivered to Miss Chadleigh, by the same traitorous or faithful servant, who, so many years before, had disconcerted her scheme of elopement. Then he had been the valet of a cornet, now he was the butler and confidential man of a General, who, in virtue of his family interest, had several good posts. Mr. Tomkins proceeded, in right of his master, to remove the seals affixed by the Rochester attorney to the old lady's repositories, and to make inventories preliminary to the sale of every article the lodge contained:—even the old lady's pet cockatoo and tortoise-shell cat were *booked*.

Miss Chadleigh, by a message sent up to her chamber, was requested to remove her goods and chattels:—the *wardrobe*,—namely, the trumpery finery, faded satins, moth-eaten furs, and court lappets of previous generations,—as soon as suited her convenience; as the Lodge was already let to a friend of the Major General's and the sale was to take place immediately. Miss Chadleigh gave instant orders for the removal of her properties; but it was not clear to the legal interpreters of the will of the Lady Louisa, that the fair legatee was entitled to the walnut-tree drawers, the japan cabinets, and carved chests, containing the aforesaid wardrobe; and she was too high-spirited and too indignant to enter into debate on the point with the despised valet in brief authority. Her

resolution was instantly taken; and in one half hour after she had despatched a note to Rochester by the discharged gardener, Governor Fox drove up to the gate in a chaise, to conduct her, as she had earnestly requested him, to their "friend" Mrs. Walpole's, where he understood she was invited and expected.

Miss Chadleigh was at this moment in the act of assisting a hot, perspiring servant girl, who, armful on armful, flung from a chamber window into the front court the miscellaneous contents of drawers, trunks, and wardrobes, the finery of the Lady Louisa. Miss Chadleigh's own corded trunks and piles of bandboxes were already arranged in the hall.

"Are you going to open a Rag Fair with the old lady's trumpery?" inquired the Governor, as he eyed, with a feeling of amusement, the tag-rag legacy of all hues and textures, fluttering upon the gravel.

"I am about to perform an *auto da' fe*, Governor,—an act of faith, and one of purification and penance. Rake these rags closer together, Molly. Nay, use your mop, pile them higher. I claim for myself, Governor Fox, the honour of applying the torch."

The discharged servants stood by grinning; the Governor was lost in perplexed amazement, while Miss Chadleigh, towering in the majesty of tragic indignation, swept by him in her gorgeous panoply of fresh black crape, bombazeen, and broad hems, and fired the pile. She stood sternly looking on, till silk, satin, tissue and brocade, muslin, lawn, and lace, fell together into ashes. And so perished the Lady Louisa's legacy:—and the legatee, majestically taking the arm of the Governor, led him, rather than was led by him, to the carriage.

What an evening of talk that was in Rochester, Brompton, Chatham, and even Stroud!—Maidstone heard of the cremation. The rumour by the next morning reached Canterbury, was carried by coach to Dover, and thence across the Channel, before it found its sure way into the newspapers, under the title, of *The Toady's Legacy—Curious Affair in the Fashionable World.*

"What a fury, what a vixen!" cried one party. "Such a high spirit! so noble a mind!" exclaimed another. Every one spoke in superlatives of the daring deed of Miss Chadleigh, whose instant marriage with Governor Fox was now universally affirmed, and fondly hoped, at all events, by the Chatham milliner, mercer, and perfumer, in whose books the lady stood several figures deep.

Had the Governor, it was remarked, not gone in person, and carried her directly from the lodge to his friend Mrs. Walpole's cottage,—where no doubt she was to remain till the ceremony took place? The only doubt remaining, that could disturb the public mind, was, whether the marriage was to be by banns or a special license; or if the bride was to have pearls or diamonds. The period of mourning would cause no delay, after the funeral pile Miss Chadleigh's affection had reared in honour of the memory of her noble patroness. Miss Scragg had indeed with her own eyes, and they were piercers into such affairs, seen Miss Chadleigh and the Governor, only yesterday, choosing a paper for his best chamber. Clusters of pansies on a salmon-coloured ground had been preferred by the lady:—at a push, the paper could be hung, and a new mantel-piece inserted, long before the new-married pair returned from their honey-moon excursion.

In the meanwhile, though Mrs. Walpole possessed largely that better part of politeness, kindness and benevolence, she could, after a little time, have spared the guest who had manœuvred herself into the Cottage, uninvited and unexpected, but certainly not unwelcome in her present friendless and pitiable condition. Governor Fox was aware that the "Widow Walpole" had previously entertained no particular affection either for the Lady Louisa, her fair companion, or any of "that set." Her friends, indeed, lay rather among the She-Saints; and this, so far as he knew, was her only weakness; but kindness and tender humanity for every creature in distress, were to her so natural, that he was not surprised at her affording a temporary asylum "to poor Kate Chadleigh, whom the old quality dame had bilked in her will." He was surprised, however, that the lady's visit drew to such length; and so were the gossips of Chatham, that the lover's ardour permitted such a length of visitation upon poor, dear Mrs. Walpole.

After the election disappointment, the Governor found Miss Chadleigh the sole inmate of Mrs. Walpole's cottage,—the mistress of the house, as a civil way of getting rid of her guest, having abandoned the garrison;—and, on recovering from the delirium of his election fever, he found Kate acting in the capacity of his own self-appointed guardian angel.

She retreated almost immediately to the Cottage, to prevent a discharge on the spot, and thus retained the right of making daily

visits of inquiry and condolence, and latterly of spending whole mornings and afternoons in nursing and amusing the invalid, who once more began to take interest in the perpetual train of public coaches and private equipages passing on the great thoroughfare, commanded by his windows.

A sick-bed had probably reminded Governor Fox of his mortality; and his enormous electioneering bill, of the good which half the sum, divided into small, refreshing streams of bounty, might have done among his Northamptonshire herd of female cousins, and nieces by the half blood. My brother James's confidential clerk, Mr. George Roberts, was sent down to Rochester, accordingly, to take the Governor's directions in drawing out his last will and testament. It was, I believe, upon the whole, a sensible, just, and discreet settlement, which accordingly pleased nobody. I was, myself, a legatee to the extent of one hundred guineas. Mrs. Walpole and her son were dismissed, at their own request, with affectionate expressions and some complimentary bequest. Black Sam was provided for; and the Governor, completely anti-feudal in all his notions, divided the residue of his fortune principally among his needy female relatives, far as kin could count, in life annuities, while the principal was finally devoted to building, and slenderly endowing some alms-houses or other, to be named the *Fox Alms-houses*, for the widows and unmarried daughters of marines, women above sixty, who had led virtuous and unblemished lives, and were members of the Church of England,—the names of Fox and Walpole to have a preference. This is tedious information. The clause really important to my story, was that which bequeathed to Miss Chadleigh and her mother, the same life-annuity the Governor had left to his half-nieces, and poor cousins. I forget whether it was £30 or £40 a-year. The lady who was almost constantly in the house, while the attorney's deputy was receiving his instructions, soon learnt the extent of her legacy, and the complete failure of her ultimate expectations. Where the testator expected thanks and gratitude, he found indignation and well-affected surprise. The wronged lady at last withdrew from Mrs. Walpole's to her old mother's residence; and her attorney forthwith waited, "in a friendly way," upon the Governor, to remonstrate.

Though the Governor had been for some time convalescent, he had scarcely yet gone beyond his garden wall; but this was not an affair with which to dally; and the rate at which he drove to London, gave the newsmongers of the next morning some colour for a Revolution in Paris, and important despatches from our ambassador at St. Petersburg, *via* Berlin. Before his smoking coursers were reined up at the head of our lane, it was time for ghosts, absent from the churchyard on a three hours' leave, to be returning within the rules. My Irish neighbour and friend, Mrs. Plunkett, was also returning home. She had lately obtained the privilege of attending one of the minor theatres, as a vender of oranges,— which, to Peg, by the way, from the irregular hours it compelled her to keep, proved a demoralizing occupation, to the extent of several quarterns of gin daily, beyond her old fixed allowance when a barrow-woman.—So that all her profits were not clear gain,— nor the theatre wholly a school of virtue. It was Peg, herself, however, ever friendly and obliging, if not quite correct, who rung the alarum at our door on the Governor's arrival; but we were too well used to nocturnal disturbances to rouse ourselves at once. I dare say the Governor and Peg, as common friends of mine, might have been acquainted before this time, for neither were difficult of access; but if not, the freemasonry of the military spirit had familiarized them at once.

"They're sleeping as sound as sintinels," I overheard Peg say, as she beat another 'larum.

"And you have seen service, good woman?" was returned by the Governor.

"It's myself believes I have seen some thrifle of hot work in my day, plase your Honour,—in Indiy and Flanders, ay, and in Portingal and Spain. Your honour may have heard of a place called Seringupatam. Had a certain famale known the vally of certain pretty things were found there, its myself need not be carrying an orange basket this night, or rather this blessed dawn, for it's near sun-riz. — Sure Mr. Richard got on his night-cap sweetly last night, — which is rare to him, the cratur, — that he sleeps so sound."

Another thundering peal followed. "So you threw away your plunder in ignorance, poor woman?" rejoined the Governor, in a compassionate tone.—"Sold your plunder to some of those sutlers, or Jew fellows, — for they an't Christians,—on the commissariat?"

"Ay, indeed,—and them riding past me in their coaches, while I am tramping a-foot, your Honour. There was a Lieutenant Chad-

leigh, of ours, sir, — he was pay-master at same time,—by the same token I washed for his Lady, and Miss ——"

"Kate?"

"The same. You knowed her then? By my faix! she was a rare one among the boys, —that is, the young jintlemen of our army,— and the beauty of the world at same time. Well, her father the lieutenant got a bit of what for all the world looked like red glass, —I have seen as good sold at a Donnybrook booth for a tinpenny, either as brooch or *ure*-rings,—which he parted with to the wife of one of the sutlers, Molly Pantague by name, (whose son is now a topping man in this big town,) for ten rupees—for these were our Indiy money — a pair of shoes, and a pound of tay, and which she afterwards sould to a Jew jeweller here in London,—for what, thinks your Honour now?—But sure there is ould Lady Wilkes stirring her stumps at long last. — Open the dure, ma'am! Mr. Richard is wanted in mighty haste, ma'am."

My old nurse, if she heard the speakers below at all, had not that confidence in Peg's steadiness, and general propriety and respectability of conduct, which warranted leaving a comfortable bed upon her midnight summons. I was now dressing myself, and peeping through the blind: Peg became impatient.

"Diaoul! — saw you ever such churlish baistes as them Lon'oners to a jintleman and a stranger." And now, setting down her basket, she thundered what is called the devil's tattoo upon the door, with both her closed fists.

"To shout, *murder! murder!* now, would help us no more than calling the watch on top of Knoc Phadrig; while they lie in a sound skin themselves, you may be kilt dead on their dure-stone, and the cockney jintlewomen would not turn over to the 'tother side of them, for fare of ruffling their nice night-cap borders. If it were not that the house is part Mr. Richard's, who is a good-hearted, simple, poor soul, and a jintleman every inch of him besides, it's little myself would think now to smash the ould woman in a dozen of her peens — handsome, with them rotten Chiney oranges."

The implied threat, notwithstanding the saving clause, redoubled my diligence in dressing myself. With Peg I knew it was at this hour but a word and a blow. I was about the last button when Peg, with a vociferous triumphant laugh, exclaimed to her growling companion, who had at last assailed the door himself, — "Stop, your Honour! I have it now." And she screamed, "Fire! fire! fire!" The plan was effectual. On the instant, that old familiar London cry came home to every man's bosom: windows flew up, doors opened, and nightcaps of both sexes peered out into the alley, while the watchmen gathered in. Peg was in an ecstacy of laughter at the commotion she had created. She introduced the Governor to my landlady as a jintleman who shurely had some good news for Mr. Richard; and went her way, declaring the trifling piece of service was no more than she would perform by day or night for any cratur ever beat a drum for his Majesty, much more for his Honour, Mr. Richard's friend, who she hoped brought good news.

I was now in the hall. What could that news be? Had any harm befallen Walpole? —Was it some dreadful accident, to be broken to my niece through me?

"What has brought me at such hours to London?" was the Governor's reply to my rapid inquiries. "You may ask that, egad; and also what made me alarm a decent family at these hours! But I crave your pardon, ma'am; my business with your lodger would brook no delay.—I suppose we shan't get at the lubberly lawyers for a couple of hours yet, though?"

"Lawyers!"

"Ay, just so, sir. Action of damages! — breach of promise of marriage! Damages laid at £7,000, and full costs prayed!"

"And you, defendant! and the fair plaintiff, pray?"

"Who, but that —— Kate Chadleigh!" roared the Governor, in a voice which shook our dwelling from cellar to garret.

It was with difficulty I refrained from laughing aloud. I was certain it was all a hoax.

"Here is what comes of elderly gentlemen flirting for years, at no allowance, with semi-aged young ladies!"

"Don't provoke me, man: — I have sometimes more than a mind to marry the jade, — keep her on bread and water, — and baste her ribs every day she rises. Don't the law of England permit a man to thrash his wife?"

"To *correct* his wife in reason, I believe, is allowable; for so has said some of our most learned judges."

"Judge Buller for one, a true-born Englishman and sound constitutional lawyer, laid down at a western assize, I'm told, that a man might baste his wife with a switch the thickness of one's thumb."

"And the ladies of Exeter, at the next circuit, sent, respectfully soliciting the exact measurement of Judge Buller's thumb, that they might have neither more nor less of the rod matrimonial than they were by law entitled to."

"By Jove, mine should be a miller's thumb if I married Kate Chadleigh. I cannot quite bring my mind up to it,—though the devil is continually putting it into my head, as the best way of having my revenge on the bold jade."

"You must resist the devil, Governor, and he will flee. I question if even Judge Buller himself would approve of a man marrying for the mere purpose of being allowed to beat his wife, under sanction of the common law; for I don't suppose there is any statute to found upon. But sit down, and tell me the rights of this mad affair."

While the Governor swallowed the cup of hot coffee, hastily prepared, and smoked a sedative pipe, I perused his correspondence with the attorney of Miss Chadleigh. It was on his part sufficiently energetic and laconic. I had no doubt that the whole was an infamous conspiracy to extort money, instigated by the attorney, who was the nephew of the late Lady Louisa's mercer, the principal creditor of Miss Chadleigh. Compassion for the unfortunate, the miscalculating, and, I must confess, the unprincipled beauty of past days, was with me as powerful a feeling, as anxiety to spare my old friend the ridicule which the exposures of a trial must inevitably produce.

Though there was, in reality, not a particle of sound evidence to sustain the case of the lady, it is astonishing how much plausible oral testimony was raked together from the gossiping chronicles of Chatham. Break down it must, if it ever came into a court; but it was certainly dexterously piled up. At every new disclosure, the perfidy and treachery of the faithless octogenarian lover became more evident and more atrocious. The long course of "true love" assiduously persevered in during the latter years of Lady Louisa, was ready to be distinctly sworn to by several chambermaids, and by lady visiters innumerable; as well as her ladyship's confident expectation that "her dear, domestic companion" was to be provided for at her death in an honourable marriage, which made other provision for her quite superfluous. True, there was the *auto da fé;* but this deed did not invalidate the stronger testimony borne to the Governor's intentions. Had he not exulted in her spirit displayed in that action? Had he not placed her under the protection of Mrs. Walpole?

The Governor's general defence was "*Denied wholly.*" "The bold baggage had forced herself into the Widow Walpole's cottage, the better to deceive the world, and conceal her plot to extort money:—never could she believe that he, Stephen Fox, knowing all of her which he knew, could ever dream of marrying such a hussy."

Affirmed, that even by the evidence of his man, Samuel Dixon, a negro, it could be shown that, for many months, Miss Chadleigh had, while the health of her betrothed required her tender care, almost lived in his house,—and on every Sunday occupied his pew in church. The Governor was at last almost distracted. He was like a man accused of witchcraft, or some impossible crime, who, seeing evidence accumulating so powerfully against him, begins at last to suspect himself of being the guilty creature which he is accused of being. But his spirit rose and cleared.

I must do the lawyers, on both sides, the justice to say that they had no doubts whatever. Miss Chadleigh's counsel saw the case even more clearly than Mr. Frankland, who was retained for the Governor, as the former was in closer contact with the other parties, and saw more of their tactics. It may be presumed that the affair afforded a great deal of conversation and amusement. Walpole believed that it never could come to trial,—the case, he said, had not a leg to stand upon; but Miss Chadleigh's lawyer, on the other hand, placed great faith in an *English Jury.* A rich old defendant,—a handsome woman, destitute and in distress:—he must be a poor orator, indeed, who could not make some few thousands out of such a case. He advised compromise,—paying a handsome sum down at once,—the defendant could well afford it. I was also almost inclined to some trimming course. The Governor, vexed as he was, possessed a better spirit. His strength lay in his obstinacy. "Suffer the vixen to browbeat me, and diddle me!—No, by Jupiter!—if my last sixpence go for it."

The important day arrived. The case was tried in London. The Court was crowded to suffocation. Plaintiff and defendant both appeared personally, attended by their respective attorneys and private friends. Miss Chadleigh, well rouged, looked resplendent through her veil. Her still fine person was, to her counsel, like the dead body of

Cæsar, in the Capitol, to Mark Antony. With pride and confidence he referred "the intelligent Gentlemen of the Jury—fathers and brothers—to this accomplished, this lovely woman—the orphan child of one who had fought and bled in the battles of his country—wounded in woman's dearest and most tender affections,—there where she had garnered up her—heart, by the caprice, the fickleness, the unaccountable, the unprovoked and cruel desertion of the sexagenarian, gallant and wealthy defendant."

If there were any truth in the Highland and Hibernian *Evil Eye*, or the *Jettatura* of the Continent, this eloquent gentleman had assuredly not escaped unscathed from this exhibition. Anon the Governor would dart a fiery glance at him in his mid career of professional falsehood; then wipe his brows, half rise, and suddenly plunge down in his seat, as I plucked him backwards, muttering, "D——d lies—by Jupiter Ammon! and a string of them! Let me contradict the fellow, Mr. Richard, or I shall burst!"

I was not much more at ease myself. True, Frankland had still to speak; but the "intelligent Gentlemen of the Jury" began so seriously to incline to the harangue of the orator—a popular favourite at the time—that I became strangely apprehensive. The day looked ill for us. I wished to my heart that we had some older, more cunning, and "used hand" than Frankland, who could pay back our opponent in his own false coin. To heighten the effect—and I can also believe that she was not wholly unmoved—Miss Chadleigh's suppressed hysterical sobs were followed by a fainting fit—which, however, did not take from her all sense and feeling; as I perceived that, when she was about to be removed, at a very critical minute, she saw and heard as acutely as she had ever done in her life. She raised herself at once, on seeing the Governor's old enemy, the Baptist druggist, and a most respectable lady of Rochester, one of the Governor's enemies, the She-Saints, enter the Court, and the former deliver a small silk-bag, such as ladies usually carry about, to my brother James, the anxious agent in this case. Governor Fox leant back on the bench, and whispered to me,—

"We are dished now, by Jupiter, Mr. Richard! The crop-ear and the quean will swear I am the Devil, and wear horns,—if it can serve Kate Chadleigh, and make against that rampant sinner, Stephen Fox."

"Don't believe that, Governor. If that lady's friends went into a Court to protect your Negro servant from what they believed your cruelty and oppression, they will as readily step forward to defend you from this abominable conspiracy. I cannot tell what brings them here to-day; but it must be for the sake of truth."

Frankland, to whom my brother made some hasty communication, immediately whispered the orator on the opposite side, who reluctantly paused in the full flight of his tropes, and received letters or papers from the mysterious embroidered bag.

Our eloquent opponent, whom the Governor had already given to all the devils, for a brazen-faced, lying rascal—examined them with a rapid, keen, professional eye. I watched his face with intense anxiety; for I knew that—though quite likely to feel great professional pride in making much of a very bad case—he would not lend himself to a client so foolish or simple as to let his knavery be easily found out. No matter for his own opinion, or his own conviction. While the world—the "intelligent Gentlemen of the Jury," could be gulled, the case was good and defensible. To look at the *morale* of any case was entirely out of the question. He looked to his brief, his fee, and his fame in the profession.

While he hastily examined the documents, Miss Chadleigh's attorney interfered; but the barrister, despite the breach of professional etiquette, waved him off. He examined the signatures of two different letters, and the post-marks, once and again; returned the papers to Frankland; and throwing his brief, or his notes, with some violence upon the table, bowed to the bench, and said aloud and emphatically, that he abandoned this case.

He flung away, the fluttering of his gown fanning the now really fainting plaintiff, and familiarly nodded to the Governor as he passed, saying, in a loud whisper, "I congratulate you, Governor Fox. Had I this morning known of this case what I know now, I would never have opened my lips in it."

"Small thanks to you, sir," returned the Governor, with a stiff bow. "You don't like to be found out, I see." But Frankland was addressing the bench,—and I begged silence.

In brief, the jury were discharged. The attorney of the enemy, who was himself deeply implicated, attempted to bustle and bluster aside to my brother; but at the sight of his own letters, he changed colour, and darted a look of fury at the wretched plain-

tiff, whom, in defiance of the Governor's anger, I conducted out of court, and placed in a coach at the nearest stand. Neither of us spoke one word; but my fair companion trembled exceedingly. She attempted no vindication, no palliation of her conduct; nor shall I, farther than to state, that it afterwards appeared she had entered upon the prosecution with reluctance, and under the threatened horrors of a jail. This much was disclosed by the correspondence in the bag, so opportunely picked up by one of the girls of a poor widow, patronized by Mrs. ——, and carried to that lady.

The carriage and horses of this lady, who proved the deliverer of the Governor at his need, waited near the court. I found him making warmly grateful and polite speeches, to which she listened with placid dignity and a benevolent smile. Sometimes I could fancy that a slight fugitive ray of humour played about her lips. Una had subdued the Lion.

To the lady, at parting, the Governor made the lowest bow he had attempted since he attended the levee of George the Third, in 1805; and, with the Baptist druggist he shook hands with cordial frankness, hoping that, as old neighbours, they might yet be better acquainted: had he known what a d——d good fellow he was, they should have settled their old affair about the pump, over a bottle of Madeira, without those rascally attorneys. But here his conscience suggested the horrible word which he had just employed in presence of a She-Saint — of that most excellent lady. I enjoyed his perplexity not a little; and so, perhaps, did she, though she looked quite unconscious.

"You must pardon me, madam. We military men of the old school are not always quite so proper in our language as we ought to be: — but if the heart be right——"

"That is much — that is all in all," returned the lady, with her habitual benevolent and cheerful smile. Her carriage drove off for Rochester.

"And that jade, Kate Chadleigh, mimicked, ridiculed, and taught me to despise that good woman, Mr. Richard."

"And you have lived to learn that there may be worse women in the world than the She-Saints," I rejoined.

"Little did I merit such kindness at her hands, — though I can't abide women going about to Meetings, Tracts, and Societies, and all that stuff: — bold hussies, — and so quiet and shy all the while."

"Nor yet their coming *boldly* into a court of law, and exposing, without hope or fear, a conspiracy against the purse and character of an old bachelor, who had suffered himself to be bamboozled——"

"Hang it, man! say no more about it; — catch any gipsy taking me in again. You are grinning now at the protection of fourscore; — but a man is never too old to learn wisdom."

Whether it be increase of wisdom, better society, or the sedative effects of an old age passed without pain, fear, or anxiety, I cannot say; but the improvement, the kindly ripening, and mellowing of the Governor's temper, has become the subject of remark and congratulation to all his friends, and particularly to the Walpoles and myself. Sometimes a whole week will elapse, during which he and his man Sam will duly read the Prayer Book, and over the blinds watch the transit of the Dover coaches, — now the Governor's chief occupation, — without his once launching his crutch after the long heels of the offending Black.

He has lately been prevailed upon by Mrs. Walpole, and his now esteemed friend, his former "She-Saint," to reinstate Mrs. and Miss Chadleigh in his will, exactly as they stood before the trial; and, of his own impulse, he went the length of presenting the latter, who was known to be in extreme want, with twenty guineas, at last Christmas, — which largesse was to remain a dead secret between himself and the bearer, Sam. With him it ever will do so. — Perhaps I have said too much about my old friend: — but, in spite of his superfluous use of expletives, and frequent reference to his Satanic majesty, there are many worse men talked of in the world and figuring in books than GOVERNOR FOX.

LITTLE FANNY BETHEL.

There is not a more weather-proof man in all London than myself, though I say it; nor one who, in all seasons, has more contempt for the Cockney comforts of omnibuses, cabs, and all chance lifts whatsoever; from the dignity of "a friend's carriage," to a "set down" in the family apothecary's snug one-horse chaise. Yet, in one or two days of every year—those few days which have a sensible effect in thinning the rolling human tide which sets in from Temple-Bar, through Fleet Street and the Strand—I am sometimes—in spite of the protective powers of my famous umbrella—induced, knowingly, to give Nurse Wilks's remonstrances the credit of a temporary confinement; and to remain for a whole morning in my apartment, with no better society than a good sea-coal fire, nor more amusing companion than my old "Diaries." My readers know that these are kept in useless ledgers, crossed and re-crossed in choice hieroglyphics of my own invention. I trust none of my admiring friends—to vindicate the credit of their own sagacity in having distinguished me—will, after my death, present these tomes to the British Museum. They would assuredly puzzle future antiquaries more than the celebrated Rosetta stone. The key to that has, I believe, been found; but I defy any future Champollion to discover that the violet and the oak sapling, which illuminate my page 486, signify Little Fanny Bethel and somebody else.

In running over this aforesaid ledger, I am sometimes tempted to believe that I shall have a long account one day against my thriving brother James, the rich solicitor, for trouble taken and anxiety endured in his matters. He gets off by alleging that I never undertake any *job* for him unless I first take a fancy to it myself. He would insinuate that, in business affairs, I am little more than an amateur performer, and that I will play nothing save my own favourite pieces, and those in my own time; and that, in the particular case of the little Allahbad Bethels, upon which I raised a special claim, I was certainly a volunteer. It may have been so. The protracted silence of the relatives of two very young orphan creatures gave scope and leisure for anxiety upon their account to any one who chose to take interest in them. I had undertaken to communicate to their uncle, Mr. Bethel, then at Baden, the death of his brother in India. This event had been followed, in a few days, by that of Captain Bethel's widow; and the children, through the kindness of friends in the regiment of their father, had been sent to England by a private subscription. They were now on the high seas, *consigned* to the care of their late father's agent in London, Mr. James Taylor. The gist of my epistle was:—"Rich and powerful elder brother, what is to be done with your younger brother's orphan children? You are head of the house; its fortunes have devolved to you in consequence of your rights of birth; but you have the feelings of a Christian and a brother, and the principles of an honourable man. You know your duty."—It was a well-worded epistle enough; but having been three times read and admired, and having received the praises of my sister Anne, I had the discretion to burn it, notwithstanding; and to adopt, with slight alteration, that concocted officially by my brother's clerk, George Roberts, which contained only the needful. I was aware of being upon ticklish ground with Mr. Bethel.

While he was pondering our information at Baden, the Indiaman, by which the little orphans were coming home, was encountering heavy gales in the Channel; and, though not absolutely wrecked, the vessel was so much damaged, that it was found necessary to lighten her, as she lay off Margate. As many of the passengers as could get off in the pilot boats had landed; and the captain and subordinate officers, too much occupied by their onerous and responsible duties, had sent their little passengers to a hotel in Margate, together with their *Ayah*, or Hindoo nurse-maid; and, by a hasty note, informed my brother that they must immediately be taken away! Ay, taken away! But whither? Baden was mute; and the Rectory of Stockham-Magna gave no sign. In it resided another family of Bethels—"more than kin and less than kind."

"No independent provision for the poor little things at all!" sighed my ever good-hearted indulgent sister-in-law. "But military men can now save so little in India, with reduced allowances and increased expenses."

"I shall never forgive Tom Bethel, though, for not ensuring his life," said my brother. "I urged him to it before he embarked, five years ago. Were it but a thousand pounds,

it might have educated the boy at some cheap Yorkshire school; and surely the friends will take the little girl!"

"The *friends!*" I repeated; for this name for the aggregate Bethels of the Hall and the Rectory sounded at this time oddly to me, in relation to the children at Margate. But they must be taken away; and I was upon the road in the next hour.

The Bethels of ——shire were one of those stanch, far-descended families of wealthy English commoners, who, from pride of birth and Jacobite politics, had disdained to veil a name so long distinguished in county annals under a modern title. They had even shunned the alliance of new-made nobility. But they had been much less successful in warding off the inroads of modern habits of expense. Notwithstanding their large estates, their church livings, and their West India property, the Bethels had been a struggling family for two generations; and, in the third, this began to be severely felt. It had been a family custom—existing from the reign of Henry VIII., which had brought the Bethels a liberal share of the general "spoliation" of that period—to reserve the best of the *family-*livings for the younger sons of the *family*—the second son being, in general, preferred. But, in the last generation, my gay acquaintance, Tom Bethel, between admiration of a dragoon uniform and saddle, and some compunctious doubts about his own vocation to the Church, had committed the indiscretion—as his college friends called it—of allowing the third brother, John, to take orders, and step into the living of Stockham-Magna, which, of itself, was worth above a clear £1200 a-year.

"Indiscretion," and "great indiscretion," were the phrases of Tom's mother and sisters, with whom his fine temper and handsome person made him a favourite. This act was afterwards called in the family, "Tom's generosity;" for John, though much more cautious, had imprudently married a young woman of birth equal to his own, with exactly nothing between them, save the hopes derived from Tom's vocation to glory. In due time, the Reverend John, who, his mother soon discovered, had a decided call, settled soberly down in the Rectory; gave up fox-hunting, to which, as a ——shireman, he had been born; exchanged the trifle of chicken-hazard, into which he had been seduced by his elder brother's fashionable guests, for a quiet, earnest rubber of whist, with a few pleasant neighbours; and, had the family interest been as good as in the reign of the Charleses, bade as fair to die a bishop as any preceding Bethel of the stock.

The Dowager Mrs. Bethel informed those of her Cheltenham correspondents who were of a serious character, that her son, John, was a most exemplary and pious clergyman; and they *reciprocated*, that he was, indeed, an ornament to the Church of England, and one who, by his piety and learning, would adorn the mitre. His sermon at Brighton had made the proper impression in the *proper* quarter.

When Captain Bethel, about two years after his love-match, visited his relations previous to embarking for India, his young wife, who, though she still thought Tom "divinely handsome" in his dragoon uniform, had also felt the slightest possible pinch of poverty, exclaimed, as they drove from the Rectory, "What pity, dear Tom, that you conceived such an aversion to the Church!—Stockham-Magna would have been a paradise to us—and so near all our friends!"

"I chose rather to die a general—and to plunder the enemy, instead of fleecing my flock, Frances," returned Lieutenant Bethel. And, with hopes of being a general, he did die a captain. Mrs. Bethel gave a long, lingering, farewell look to that charming place, where she could willingly have left her little girl, the infant Fanny; but, as she told us in passing through London, neither her mother-in-law, the dowager, nor Mrs. John Bethel, had once spoken of her infant, deadly as India was to children.

People will die in England as well as in India, even though living in a comfortable Rectory, drawing great tithes and small, and in momentary expectation of golden prebends. The family vault was again opened to receive the Rev. Dr. Bethel, shortly after he had followed his mother to that resting-place, and some months before the death of his brother in India. His wife, though she had rashly entered the family, had gained the esteem of its leading members, Mr. Bethel and his lady; and, when she was left a widow with three young children, things were arranged pleasantly for her, by the appointment of the same young cousin to the living who had preached Dr. Bethel's funeral sermon. She continued to reside at the Rectory, as before; and the intimacy between the family at Bethel's Court and that at the Parsonage, became more cordial and intimate than it had ever been during the life of the excellent and venerated person, as he was called in

the funeral sermon, who had formed the bond of union. It was whispered in the tea and card circles of Wincham — the neighbouring market town, a place of great ecclesiastical antiquity, and, until the era of schedule B, of great political *consideration*—that Mrs. Dr. Bethel had a still deeper concern in the great and small tithes of Stockham-Magna, than arose from her continued residence in the Rectory. But this amounted nearly to that ill-defined crime called simony; and the rumour had clearly originated with one or other of the five Misses Roach, sisters of the whilom principal surgeon of Wincham, who, when attending the lady at the Hall in a sudden illness, had, as the reward of his skill and assiduity, obtained a half promise of the living for his son and their nephew :—it was, therefore, liable to question, if not to doubt. No one in Wincham would or could believe that Mr. Bethel, with his high-church principles and high gentlemanly feelings, could wink at an arrangement which spared his own purse, by fixing his brother's family upon the new incumbent. It was not to be credited. But, at the same time, it was agreed, on all hands, that Mr. Whitstone, the new Rector, was the most generous of cousins, and that Mrs. Dr. Bethel and her children still lived in the same comfort and elegance which they had enjoyed during the life of her husband.

Sales by piecemeal, and mortgages by wholesale, had nearly eaten up the family estates of the Bethels: but Mr. Bethel still derived a very large income from the estates which his lady, also a Bethel, of a younger branch, had brought into the family; though the tenure by which they were held constituted the greatest cross which he and his wife were destined to bear. At her death, without children, they went to yet another branch of this far-spread stock; and Mrs. Bethel had given no heir to the united properties. The want of children, in a great and ancient family, like that of the Bethels, is always a subject of infinite interest to the kindred, and of concernment to the whole neighbourhood. In ordinary circumstances, Mrs. Dr. Bethel, of the Rectory, might have submitted to the will of Heaven, under a misfortune which brought her own son next in succession: after "Tom's boy in India," indeed,—but a child there was hardly worth reckoning upon. As the family stood, however, she would far rather that a cousin-german of her daughters' should be at the head of this fine property, than that it should pass away to a lad in the North, whom no one knew any thing about. Her sincere sympathy in the family affliction of Bethel's Court, had advanced her in favour there; but it was her aversion to the unknown heir presumptive, sometimes laughingly insinuated, and at other times seriously betrayed, as if by accident, when prudence and good-breeding were conquered by strong feeling, that confirmed her influence at the Hall.

Mr. and Mrs. Bethel, still a fashionable, but not now a gay couple, had lived a good deal on the continent for several years; during which period, their clever sister-in-law was their confidant and manager in all domestic affairs. It was, therefore, to her that Mr. Bethel wrote, upon receipt of my brother's letter, regarding the disposal of the orphan children. We were afterwards told that he was much affected by the death of his only remaining brother, whom he had always loved better than the Rev. John; and that, in the first impulse of tenderness, he proposed to take the children home;—but his lady prudently referred to her sister-in-law.

In the mean time, I reached Margate without any remarkable adventures. These are, indeed, become as rare in England as the wild boar or the wolf.

What a pretty image is that of Campbell!—

> Led by his dusky guide,
> Like Morning brought by Night.

I prevented it being literally realized to me; for I ran up stairs to the parlour, where the fair little people whom I sought, sat upon the carpet, in the lap of their dusky guide,—the amusement and delight, with their strange speech and pretty voices and ways, of all the chamber-maids and waiters of the establishment. The little English speech among the three was possessed by the lovely fairy creature afterwards known among us as "Little Fanny Bethel." She was, at this time, not more than six years old, small and delicate of her age; and with the tender pale-rose tint of children who have been born, or who have spent their childhood in India. She started up on my approach, advanced a step, and then timidly hung back, raising her mild and intelligent gray eyes with a look of doubt and deprecation. I was more struck with the remarkable expression of the countenance of the little maiden than with the loveliness of her features, and the flood of silky fair hair, which contrasted so singularly with the bronzed complexion and dark eyes of the squat attendant upon whose shoulder she shrunk back. Her heart, revealed through her

eyes, gave out meanings which it was impossible that she could herself have apprehended. Her feminine instincts, child as she was, had far outstripped her understanding; and she looked at me with a perplexed consciousness that her fate was in my hands—that she was a friendless orphan among strangers. Happy confidence — or be it credulity, still thrice blest credulity of childhood, which throws itself, in boundless trust, into the bosom of whatever approaches it wearing the smiling semblance of kindness! Little Fanny's brow and eyes cleared and brightened at my frank accost, and she voluntarily continued to hold by the hand which she had kissed in a pretty fashion of her own. Poor little thing! my heart already yearned over her; her kiss was more loving than a lover's.

In a very few seconds, nothing seemed to affect Fanny, save a feeling of sisterly responsibility for the manners and bearing of her little brother, in whose behalf she wished to bespeak my kindness, while she introduced him to me.

Tom, who, from the lap of his nurse, had been anxiously eyeing the visiter, was a bold, resolute-looking urchin, with a square and very broad forehead, which he knitted into a most martial frown, when I attempted to take the hand that he clenched and drew back. Master Tom's attitudes were as valiant in defiance as his sister's had been gentle in deprecation; but, as I am not apt to fall in love with strangers at first sight myself—nor fond of your very civil and demonstrative people — I winked at Tom's repulse, and wisely forebore pressing my attentions until they might be more welcome. I was already amused by the little maiden, who, with a look of indescribable childish blandishment, whispered in Hindostanee, and caressed the little fellow, as if coaxing him not to throw away his friend in foolish passion, until Master Tom laughed out with returning good humour, and looked so much handsomer when shewing his white teeth, and a mouth wreathed with smiles and dimples, that I made a second attempt to introduce myself, which again instantly overclouded him, and grieved Fanny.

"Poor Tom is so young—dear little fellow!" she whispered in her liquid infant voice, and in a tone between apology, coaxing, and entreaty, which might have melted a savage. I felt that, if all the world were like myself, the faults of turbulent Tom stood a good chance of being forgiven, were it but for the sake of sweet Fanny. While this passed, the *Ayah* was gesticulating even to sputtering, and addressing me in those shrill tones, which, had I not been well accustomed to overhear the colloquies of my fair neighbour, Mrs. Plunkett, the Irish orange-woman—a title, by the way, this of *Orange*-woman, Peg has, of late, mightily resented — I should have imagined arrant scolding; especially as, in the course of her appeal, her dark eyes continually flashed from me to the children, and shot out lurid fire. So far, however, as Fanny could interpret Hindostanee, the discourse of the Ayah was the very reverse of hostile. It was compassionate and complimentary of herself — a daughter of Brahma — upon her sacrifices for the sake of the children, and her exceeding condescension in coming into contact with a vile, degraded, and filthy hog-eating race of Europeans.

By the kindness of the landlady, I procured some warm clothing for the half-naked children; and we set out for London, to which I intended to return by Chatham, that Mrs. Walpole, and my friend Governor Fox, might see their old friend Tom Bethel's children. If I was not legacy-hunting, I was friend-seeking for my pretty charge. The Ayah sat in the bottom of the carriage, by her own request; and Fanny, keeping constant possession of my hand, looked from one window, while Tom hallooed from another, as we bowled through the rich meadows and farmy fields of the Isle of Thanet, as light-hearted and happy as if the fondest parents and the most genial home were awaiting us at our journey's end.

Tom, by this time, did me the honour to suppose I could play the *tom-tom* very well, and to command a specimen of my powers when we should get *home;* and, with his sister's aid as interpreter, he communicated many things very interesting to himself, which had taken place at Allahbad, or upon the voyage. Without any thing approaching the grace, sweetness, and infant fascination of little Fanny, Master Tom was a manly and intelligent child; and, as the brother and sister, having sung a Hindostanee air and said their prayers, fell asleep in my arms, worn out by their own vivacity, I could not help philosophizing upon the state of society, or rather of factitious feeling, which made a horse, a picture, or a necklace, any mark of conventional distinction — yea, the merest trifle, be considered so important by their high-born relations,— and those lovely and engaging creatures, gifted with such admirable powers and wonderful faculties, be

considered a burden and a plague. There is nothing of so little real value, save for a few years to the original owners, as those small germs of the lords of the creation. The value of every other commodity is better maintained in polished society, than what is surely, in mistake, called the noblest and most valuable of all. Had Tom and Fanny been a brace of spaniels, or cockers of the King Charles or Marlborough breed, how much easier would it have been to dispose of them!

Governor Fox kept us a day, and treated us with the utmost kindness and hospitality. Black Sam, whose amusing tricks probably reminded Tom of his Indian *bearer*, ingratiated himself with the Ayah and the children; and the Governor yielded so far to the infantine fascination of little Fanny, as to present her with a lapful of his favourite African curiosities; while he privately assured me, that, if Madam Bethel and the rest failed to do the handsome thing by Tom's babies, why then he was a bachelor without chick or child, and he would show them Northamptonshire! This he again solemnly repeated as he put us into the coach for London; and I was not disposed to forget it; for the Governor was none of your smooth-lipped professing persons. His word was his bond—and it carried interest, too.

The orphans were received with genuine motherly kindness by my sister Anne, to whom Tom at once gave that place in his affections and confidence which it had taken me three days to acquire. Even yet he admitted of no personal contact, but returned a salute as often with a blow as a caress. The first trial of the children in London, was parting with their dark nurse, for whom we found an opportunity of returning home with a family going out to India. It was Tom's boast that he cried first when *Moomee* sailed away *home;* but it is certain that Fanny cried longest. The quick sensibility of this child was less remarkable than the tenacity of her grief, which broke out afresh when thus reminded of the loss of "poor mamma," by the absence of Moomee. Time, the gracious balm-shedder, usually does his work of healing rapidly with patients under seven years of age,—but it was not altogether so with Fanny Bethel; and Tom's perverseness was almost welcome to us as a diversion of her sorrow. Yet Tom's rebellion scarcely deserves so hard a name. Accustomed to a train of Indian attendants anticipating every wish, studying every glance, and following every movement like silent shadows, Master Tom, in a London nursery, felt like a deposed prince, and was quite as ready to play the tyrant when an occasion offered. The turbulence, caprice, and open rebellion in which he had been encouraged by the Ayah, had threatened to subvert the mild despotism of Mrs. Gifford, my sister's confidential nurse, who, for eighteen years, had been as supreme above stairs, in her legitimate territory, as was my brother's will in the parlour, or his wife's pleasure in the drawing-room. Master Tom had, in a rage, torn her best lace cap, threatened to throw her shawl on the fire, and kicked her shins. The free-born spirit of an English nurse could not brook such treatment. "Did Master Tom fancy she was one of his black nigger slaves?" So, if he kicked, she cuffed; while poor little Fanny was the deepest, if not the only sufferer of the three. What was sport to Gifford and Tom, was to her death. Soothing down Tom's passion, pleading and apologizing to Gifford, and weeping, while, like the Sabine women, she threw herself into the strife, little Fanny would clasp her brother and address the nurse, whispering, in that voice which no one could resist—"Poor Tom is *so* young, dear little fellow,—and he has no mamma now to make him good."

It was then the subdued Gifford's turn to apologize; while Tom himself would volunteer a fraternal kiss, as if already manfully conscious that the slightest atonement, on his part, ought to be thankfully received by Fanny. This is a lesson which little brothers learn with astonishing facility, even when it is not directly taught, and sometimes when the very reverse is apparently inculcated.

"Gentle and easy to be entreated," Fanny appeared the obliged party upon all such occasions of general reconciliation; for, to her sweet nature, sullenness or unkindness was the bitterest form of suffering. To live surrounded with cold hearts and scowling or averted eyes, was blighting and misery. In the few weeks the children remained with us, Fanny endeared herself to our whole circle; nor did Tom want friends and admirers, who were willing to place his faults to an Indian education. Along with little Fanny's singular sweetness of nature, was the fascination of her ever-wakeful and watchful affection for her little brother. She already seemed his unconscious guardian angel, whose salutary influence over his wayward moods was daily upon the increase. Though Tom, in his violent fits, would meet a sugar plum, a

sugared promise, or a menace, alike with a blow, he would look serious and try to command himself, when he perceived how much he afflicted Fanny.

While the children were displaying their natural characters in such childish ways, Mrs. Dr. Bethel was making her calculations at Stockham-Magna; the result of which was, offering to take charge of Fanny, and to educate her along with her own two daughters. But, for the boy! "She was indeed at a loss what to do with her own son — women were so inadequate to training boys even in their infant years."

It was not unreasonable to imagine that Mr. Bethel would charge himself with the education of both his nephews; and it is certainly easier to receive a little girl into a family where there are already girls, than to maintain a youth at school and college. In the following week, I escorted the children and my sister, who now made a long-promised visit, to Stockham-Magna. We had a charming excursion. It was now near midsummer — the pride of the year in the pastoral and woodland country we traversed. And then the Rectory of Stockham-Magna itself! I had never seen so picturesque, so natural, so perfectly English a resting-place for the musings of divine philosophy — for dignified intellectual repose and calm meditation. Neither the district nor the particular spot boasted any bold original feature of scenery. A grassy vale, or, as probably, a rushy one, a stream, and a few knolls and slight inequalities of surface, formed the groundwork from which this abode of learned leisure and pastoral care had been fashioned out centuries before, and gradually moulded into its present beauty. Episcopalian superintendence had preserved and perfected what Popish taste had projected and so far completed; and Time, with his ripening and mellowing touches, had harmonized the whole.

The buildings were of what is called the Elizabethan age — a phrase which I defy any man to define; though, popularly, it is very well understood in its application to whatever form of dwelling, be it manor-house, farm-house, or parsonage, that is irregular and antique, graced with tall clustered chimney stalks, quaint windows, and an infinity of intricate adjuncts, forming a picturesque whole. But, if these arched and lancet windows and doorways, glancing from the rich sylvan garniture of ivy and trailing plants, like the bright face of a young beauty half veiled by her dishevelled ringlets, were of the happy age of Elizabeth — for I hold them of much older date — surely those magnificent trees were of more ancient growth. Both looked as if they had flourished in undisturbed tranquillity for centuries. The old walnut trees, of prodigious size, which stood near the house, were probably finer specimens of their kind than those avenues of beeches leading to the "willowy brook" and piece of water, (beyond the massy garden walls,) in which the swans, at this hour, appeared floating as in an inverted sky, or as if nestling among the trembling shadows of the bordering trees. And every thing was so trim, and in such high yet easy and enjoying habitable order — there was such entire freedom, with unobtrusive neatness.

My pretty companions were enchanted, as I imagined, with the first view of their future home; but I subsequently discovered that the small delicate spaniel and the greyhound had attracted my friend Tom's regard, while Fanny rejoiced in those troops of doves that, on the roof of the porch and at every "coigne of vantage," were cooing, in drowsy murmurs, as they luxuriously basked in the sun. Truly some small portion of that part of the national wealth called the great tithes of Stockham-Magna, could hardly be better expended than in preserving the beauty and order of this ecclesiastical abode, had it been no more than as a picture and ornament to the neighbourhood. Dear, good, and haply honest and enlightened church-reformer, wheresoever your zeal may carry the besom and direct the ploughshare, do, in the name of natural taste and gentle antiquity, spare me the Rectory of Stockham-Magna! By the memory of the hundreds of solemn festivals and holyday tides, and of the wakes and processions which it has witnessed — by the ever fresh beauty of that terraced garden — by those clipt monster yews, and that box-hedge, broad and high as the walls of ancient Babylon, the wonder and pride of the county — by that quaintly-carved, heavy dial, with its rich and cumbrous masonry: — by all this, and by the mightier conjuration of the memory of good men's feasts, and of those social charities which, long gathering in a hundredfold, dispensed at the rate of ten or five — spare me this one cosie nest of the life called holy and the leisure named learned; — this pleasant land of drowsyhead, where a succession of mild, gentlemanly persons for generations lived a tranquil, elegant, semi-

sensual life, undisturbed by Methodists, Ranters, Radical prints, and the Schoolmaster:—spare me but this one memorial of the times when as yet the reverential peasantry had not surmised, that warmer affection for their pigs and corn-sheaves emanated from the Rectory, than for either the comfort of their bodies or the care of their souls.

The appearance of a lady's cap, at one of the embowered lower windows, must have recalled the wandering attention of little Fanny, and the noise of the chaise-wheels on the instant brought all the Bethels of Stockham-Magna to the porch, to welcome the orphans of Allahbad. "Oh, Tom, do be a good boy!" whispered Fanny, kissing him, as she anxiously adjusted his shirt-frill, and shaded back his hair, while the carriage drew up.

"Aunt Bethel" performed her part very well. She received the orphans in her maternal arms with good and graceful effect; spoke not too much; and, while she gave her hand to my sister, suppressed the starting tears. Fanny pressed her lips to the lady's hand in her own sweet fashion; and, alarmed at Tom's sturdy backwardness, whispered, in her pretty imperfect English, her wonted apologetic—"Tom is *so* young, poor little fellow!—and he has no mamma now to make him good." Every one was melted. Her two cousins, Harriet and Fanny, affectionately kissed "Allahbad Fanny," and shook hands, almost in spite of him, with Tom, whom their brother Henry soon carried off on some boyish quest—Fanny's eyes anxiously following them, as if she were afraid that her turbulent charge might, in some way, compromise himself with these new friends, even in the first hour. The ladies were now engaged in conversation; and it was from me, to whom she sidled up, that Fanny entreated leave to follow "poor Tom." The leave was instantly granted by Mrs. Bethel; and the children, in the glow of novelty, went out in a group. It was now that my sister eloquently expatiated upon the sweet disposition and affectionate nature of little Fanny, her gentle docility, and remarkable attachment to her little brother. "Poor little creatures! they love each other the better for having nothing else to love!" was her concluding observation, while tears glistened in her eyes. My good sister, perhaps, showed more tenderness than discretion, in thus addressing the future patroness of Fanny; but that lady, a rigid and zealous worshipper of all the family of the Decorums and Proprieties, performed her part to admiration—neither overdoing, nor yet falling short of what ought to be expected from her, or was due to position and circumstances.

Our stay, which was to have been for a fortnight, was with difficulty prolonged to a week. My sister, upon hearing that some of her children had colds, affected fully as much home-sickness as she really felt; for the studious observance of every rite of hospitality, and the most scrupulous politeness, did not compensate for a certain feeling of restraint, a lack of that frank, social, cordiality which it is much easier to understand than to explain. Our mutual sympathy on these points, and our affection for the orphan children, made us both sedulous though tacit observers of the characters of those among whom they were thrown.

In the disputes which early arose between the boys, though Mrs. Dr. Bethel, like a female Brutus, gave judgment against her own son, on consideration of Tom being a spoilt child, of little more than half his age, it was easy to see to which side her heart inclined. Then Tom, with his tricks and wilfulness, kept her in a state of perpetual nervous apprehension. He was for ever in perils or scrapes, and seducing his cousins into like adventures. Nature had stamped him a bold, resolute, daring imp; and his five months' voyage had confirmed the tendency. Now he was tumbling into the pond; now embarking in tubs on voyages of discovery; next plunging into the dog-kennel, or running among the horses' feet; and encouraging Henry to climb the walnut trees, up into which the unbreeched urchin would leap like a squirrel, laughing at the screams and remonstrances of nurse-maids and cousins.

But Fanny was naturally as tractable as Tom was rebellious. It was astonishing how soon she learned, as if by instinct, that she was to have no will, no property, no pleasure, that was not at the sufferance and mercy of her cousins; because her name-sake, Frances, was "such a child," and Harriet's health "was so delicate." It was equally astonishing how quickly Tom, as if by a similar instinct, constituted himself her champion, and did battle for her rights, in the nursery or the garden, in spite of herself, and long before he understood the language of those around him who were invading them.

Among the toys which Fanny had brought from London, was a Dutch milkwoman in complete costume, which Harriet, who loved

every thing that was novel, and admired whatever was not her own, appropriated without much ceremony; and which Tom reclaimed with even less. In the struggle, the Dutch lady was denuded, and Harriet, who was at the age when children shed their teeth, lost one of hers in the fray, and was brought bleeding into the drawing-room, followed by a maid dragging in the sturdy culprit, accompanied by the weeping Fanny. One might have excused a mother for being at first alarmed and offended, though the criminal was almost an infant; but what came out, in the course of investigation, ought to have produced a more impartial judgment and a mitigated punishment.

But Harriet's tooth was gone, and it had been followed by a few drops of blood and torrents of vengeful tears; and she protested that she did not mean to keep the Frau Jansen — the Dutchwoman, the unlucky Helen of this new Trojan war — but only for a day or so, to look at her. Tom was summarily adjudged to solitary confinement in the housemaid's broom closet, on the attic floor, and was led off, persisting in dogged silence, while Fanny sobbed as if her little heart would burst. From that hour, open hostilities were proclaimed between Tom and the family, which never again ceased for many years, save during some temporary, and always hollow truce.

When I left the ladies in the drawing-room after dinner, on the day of Tom's punishment, I sought the children in the Wilderness, where they generally went, with their attendant, at this sultry hour: but no Fanny was there.

"She is naughty, too," said her little namesake, tossing her head with the air of a small woman and a thorough family partisan. I followed up the adventure by seeking out my little friend. She was sitting on the garret stairs, at the door of Tom's prison, whispering to him through the key-hole. The sight of a sympathizing friend—for nature had already told her that I was one—made Fanny's tears flow afresh, and she began to sob out her little apology, as senseless, perhaps, as the reiterated wail of a lapwing, but as plaintive —"Poor Tom is *so* young, poor little fellow," &c. &c. I played the discreet part for once, and led her to her aunt. Tom was released, on our joint pleading—an amnesty was proclaimed — and Frau Jansen, like one of the wantonly-sacrificed minor powers at a general pacification, was made a bonfire of.

We left the Rectory next morning, Fanny weeping abundantly to part with us, while Tom would have been well contented to return to London, which he proposed to do, had his sister not been condemned to remain behind him. I have seldom seen my sister Anne more affected, than when we fairly got out of sight, and when she first gave unrestrained way to her feelings — a tender mother's foreboding feelings for orphan children!

That dear little Fanny!—how perilous to a creature situated like her were those gifts which nature had so lavishly bestowed—that tenderness and quick sensibility to which the contact of the cold and the selfish must bring either blighting or perversion!

Turbulent and rebellious as Master Tom continued to be — a care and often a grief to his sister—I believe he was her greatest blessing too; for, with all his faults, he sincerely loved her, and he was one being on whom her affectionate feelings could expand themselves unchecked. No one, I believe, brings into this world a heart like Fanny's, without finding something to love, even in the very worst circumstances: but Fanny found so much to love in every one with whom she came in contact, until Tom, as he grew up, began to despise the affection she bore to many persons whom he hated, as girlish *poltroonery*, or almost meanness; and he even charged her with hypocrisy in her attachment to an aunt who had not been too kind, and to cousins not too gentle. But Tom durst not persist in an accusation to which his heart gave the lie as strongly as did Fanny's silent tears.

Tom had been early sent off to school with his cousin Henry; and when the returning holydays brought the boys to the Rectory, the Allahbad Bethels, in again meeting each other, were almost as happy as the children gathered beneath the wing of their mother. Then came a full interchange of hearts and confidence, as with interwined arms the orphans wandered away together through the woods and dells of Bethel's Court, which converged on the narrow grounds of the Rectory. Tom was more and more astonished, and almost angry, in every succeeding year, while he was below fifteen, that Fanny had so little or rather nothing to complain of —no quarrel that he could adopt—no enemy on which his prowess might revenge her.

In all this time, I had never seen Fanny Bethel nor her brother, though I had occasionally corresponded with both. Indeed, I believe that I was for some years Fanny's

only correspondent; and, as my epistles always accompanied my sister's well-executed town commissions, and presents of toys and books for the Rectory children, they were probably tolerated, if not welcome.

For the first six years after I had seen her, Fanny partook of the instructions of the governess Mrs. Bethel had engaged for her own daughters; and, blessed with a humble, loving nature, meekness and submissiveness cost her less effort than any other creature I ever knew,—and I believe that her childhood was not unhappy. But a more critical age was arriving, and Providence was silently opening up new resources to the orphan girl.

The sisters of Mr. Whitstone, the Rector of Stockham-Magna, had, some years after the arrival of the Allahbad Bethels, settled in the neighbouring town of Wincham, to be near their brother, who, though his nominal residence was the Rectory, oftener lived with them. These respectable old maiden ladies, the daughters of a deceased clergyman, were, of course, as near in degree of kindred to Mrs. Dr. Bethel as was their brother, though she never seemed to know this. The younger, Miss Rebecca Whitstone — though younger was here but a relative term, for she was almost fifty—was merely a good, plain, useful, and active person, sincerely devoted to her brother and her elder sister, Miss Hannah, who had obtained over her the influence which a strong mind is said to hold over a feeble one within its range. The latter lady had been an invalid from a very early age, in consequence of a fall from horseback; and, to afford occupation and exercise to an uncommonly active intellect, she had afterwards received from her father what is termed a learned education, which, however, had none of the effects that learning is said to produce upon female minds. She did read the classics in the originals — for that was her solace as she lay the livelong day upon the couch to which her helpless lameness confined her; and she studied the sciences; and in astronomy, in particular, was believed, even by her brother's old college companions, to have made astonishing progress; and not "for a woman:" — that mortifying qualification was, in her case, withheld. Simply, she had made astonishing progress, and even discoveries, in science. With all this deep learning, and a taste for refined literature, Miss Whitstone was a woman of magnanimous feelings and high principles; pleasant, kind, and social in her manners; tinctured with high-souled romance, and yet not above her surrounding world of Wincham. She also possessed a flexible vein of humour, which had made her conversation exceedingly captivating to young and old, before her acquirements had risen in judgment against her; and Miss Whitstone's invalid chamber came in time to be, after a certain hour of the morning, the levee-room of the privileged talent and modest worth of Wincham. It was the rallying point of its best, if not its finest society; though, this being a small town where no one was liable to be compromised, the very finest — yea, even stray specimens of the "county people" — were among Miss Whitstone's occasional visiters. It was even said that matches had been, if not made, yet certainly helped on, around her invalid chair; though the parties were not of such consideration as to make Mrs. Dr. Bethel desirous (now that Harriet was twenty, and her own Fanny seventeen) that her daughters should often appear among the learned lady's bonny *blue belles*.

If there be such a thing as sympathetic attachment — and I am sure there are spontaneous feelings which are quite equivalent to it—such had grown up between the invalid Miss Whitstone and the orphan Fanny. The Rector himself came, in time, to partake of an affection so warmly felt by his favourite sister; and the notable Miss Rebecca, moved by these considerations, and the gentleness and good looks of the child, early and kindly began, characteristically, to attend to little omissions and flaws in gloves and ribbons, and shoes and stockings, which a mother's eye prevented from appearing in her cousins. During a year that those young ladies were sent to a first-rate finishing seminary near London, Fanny, who had often spent happy days, weeks, and months with the poor Miss Whitstones, lived with them altogether, to enjoy the advantage of such masters as chance and the London holydays relieved, by changing the scene of their professional fagging, from a very great town to a very small one.

One of these was a drawing-master whom I had introduced by letter to the Miss Whitstones. It was certainly a misfortune — but, in this locality, no ineradicable blot — that the Rector's sisters, for a certain part of the year, let their first floor to such respectable lodgers, as being single men, — and certainly *gentlemen*—were well recommended to them. Mr. Edmund, the gentleman I had recommended, was a painter, and a gifted one, as was proved by the beautiful contents of his portfolio, and a few finished cabinet

specimens which he carried down; but he seemed to receive little or no encouragement in Wincham to open classes for teaching his art; and he spent his time, either in reading or rambling about the surrounding country, of which one of the most attractive spots, to an artist, was the beautiful park of Bethel's Court. Miss Rebecca was concerned that a lodger so regular in all his habits, so gentlemanlike in his manners, so nice in his linen, and so punctual with his bills, should find no pupils; and Miss Whitstone, stretched upon her invalid couch, was doubly vexed, first, because it must be annoying to a man whose business is to teach drawing, to have no one to teach; and, secondly, that she could not afford to engage his services wholly for Fanny, and thus an opportunity might be lost such as was never likely to recur,—for when would so masterly an artist again appear in Wincham? Besides, Fanny had a decided genius for painting. Miss Whitstone had, indeed, a knack of discovering natural genius for every thing high and amiable in Fanny. Her first delightful discovery had been Fanny's exceeding *genius* for loving, and especially for loving her brother Tom; while to Fanny, Miss Whitstone's earliest, and still dearest charm, was discovering good qualities in "poor Tom," even in his perverse early boyhood; which no one else would allow. "Give a dog an ill name and hang him," says the proverb; and the converse holds as strongly. Miss Whitstone was ever anxious to find out, and place in the proper light, young Bethel's good qualities; and they germinated and expanded in the warmth of her generous culture and encouragement, while others could only perceive the ill weeds waxing apace. Fanny, who had, for several years, been her amanuensis, never performed that duty with more good will, than when Miss Whitstone wrote to Eton to Tom, sending him those affectionate counsels which his respect for her made effectual for the moment, and which, in tenderness, only a mother could have exceeded; and those directions for his subordinate studies which few mothers have the power of giving, and not many fathers.

From the time that he had, at three years' old, traversed so much of the wide ocean, Tom's decided vocation had been the sea. This would seem almost an instinct with some boys, as if implanted by nature to facilitate the intercourse and promote the civilisation and happiness of mankind; and Tom Bethel was of the predestined salt-water number. But his uncle, who had never yet seen him, had decided that Tom, the would-be sailor, should be Thomas the forced divine; and the boy had no choice save submission or running away to sea, which he would willingly have done at every school vacation, save for Fanny's sake; but, as Tom advanced nearer the years of discretion, he began to think better of a mode of life which, as soon as he got through the university, and one of the family livings fell vacant, opened a home to that gentle sister. He would even have submitted to the death of Mr. Whitstone as soon as he had obtained orders himself, and have felt no remorse at depriving his aunt of her alleged simoniacal share of the great tithes; because he squared this want of affection to his own conscience, by arranging that Miss Whitstone and Miss Rebecca could then live with Fanny and himself at the Rectory, like gentlewomen; and give up letting first-floors to itinerant painters and drawing-masters. Tom, as a male branch of the house of Bethel, though one of the barest, had not been for seven years at a public school, without acquiring ideas of family consequence and of *style* quite beyond those of his sister; though, on some points, they were qualified by generous exceptions for plebeian friends.

In the first season of Mr. Edmund appearing at Wincham as a portrait-painter without sitters, and a drawing-master without pupils, he had been tolerated by the lively Eton lad, in consideration of Miss Whitstone's esteem, what Tom reckoned his unobtrusive modesty, and the quiet refinement of his manners; but, in the second summer, when Tom found him almost domesticated in the family parlour, and the companion of Fanny in sketching-practice excursions round the country, the young gentleman — and he was not quite sixteen — took an affair in dudgeon, which had already been seriously discussed in Miss Collins the milliner's back-shop, by her best customers, and at more than one tea-table of the town. Now, in Wincham, Allahbad Fanny was a general and a great favourite; which was the more remarkable, as she had never courted popularity, and was in no condition either to grace with her favour, or patronize by her interest. Howsoever it may fare with other country towns, I can assure my readers that a young lady who enjoyed the united suffrages of Wincham, was in circumstances as rare as enviable. And even now there was censure; but Miss Whitstone, with her learning

and her odd ways, was more blamed than Fanny Bethel, for those rural outbreaks which were held a gross and daring innovation on all the ruled proprieties of this community. That the curate's orphan daughter, Patty, whom her aunt, Miss Collins, was educating for a governess, shared in Fanny's lessons, and generally in her sketching excursions, was a shallow blind, at which they and Tom Bethel laughed outright, the latter angrily. As for Miss Whitstone sanctioning this kind of intercourse — learned, clever, and excellent woman, as she undoubtedly was — how, as Tom justly thought, was any provincial elderly lady, such as she, to know the world and mankind like an Eton scholar? As the natural protector of his sister, it was become Tom's duty to interfere, and to assume a part which female guardians and friends had so obviously neglected. No time was to be lost. But how was Tom to scold Fanny — that dear, kind, generous, and most disinterested creature, whom every one loved — yes! even worldly Aunt Bethel — who, from infancy had had no hope, no joy, no being save in him? No! Tom could not scold, nor even remonstrate; but he heartily abused both the Mesdames Bethel, who so improperly deserted their duty to their orphan niece; and then playfully, or at least in a way Tom meant to be playful, he rallied Fanny first upon her intimacy with all the vulgar spinsters and dowagers of Wincham, and next upon her new passion for sketching from nature. Fanny's blushes and evident distress stopped the current of Tom's wit, and quickened his fears; and now he reminded her, still with affected pleasantry, (for Tom was very sly,) of her birth as a Bethel, beggar Bethel as, in the meanwhile, she was; and of the matrimonial distinctions her eminent personal advantages and family connexions entitled her to look for, were she only placed where she ought to be, and thus seen, admired, and courted by the noble, the wealthy, and the honourable. Fanny laughed now, and Tom was displeased. There was implied ridicule of his judgment and knowledge of life, in the tone of her laughter; and these were points on which Tom was at this time very susceptible; yet he would have forgiven this in consideration of her secluded education, and innate modesty and humility of character, save for the many cross accidents that were arising to mar her splendid fortunes. Her cousins had lately returned from their finishing school, and lengthened visits to fashionable friends and relatives; with much of that high-toned air, that *manner* and *style*, so captivating to Tom and his brother Etonians; and in which Fanny, retiring, shy, sensitive, was still so lamentably deficient. That his own sister, "Little Fanny," as she continued to be named, long after her graceful pliant figure overtopped all the females of her family, was beyond comparison a lovelier, and far more *loveable* girl, than either the cold, stately, fashionable looking Harriet, or the vivacious, pretty, petulant Fan, he was most reluctant to doubt; but then, schoolboys imagining themselves youths, and college-lads fancying themselves men, had admired the thorough-bred air and style of the Rectory Bethels, at a Music Meeting, and had altogether passed over Allahbad Fanny, who had been left to the attentions of Mr. Edmund, her drawing-master, and a little good-natured notice from her cousin Henry, who had always been kind to her. Now, the above were immutable authorities with Tom in all questions of taste. It is true, Henry Bethel, who was also becoming a judge of ladies, wines, and horses, and who, moreover, was now of Christ Church, made some atonement, by declaring, after a couple of bottles of wine, that, though his sister Harriet was certainly a showy, dashing girl, and Frances a pretty creature enough, neither were to be compared in a summer's day with little Allahbad Fanny; and he concluded, by wishing that he were a rich man for her sake — though his mother must not hear of this. Tom, both gratified and resentful, was compelled to gulp as much of this declaration as his pride could not swallow; and now he fancied he had found a cue to Mrs. Dr. Bethel giving up so much of her niece's society to "poor Cousin Whitstone, to whom little Fanny was always such a comfort." It is probable that Mrs. Bethel had not very overwhelming fears of immediate danger from a constant domestic intercourse between her niece and her son — still, it was prudent to be guarded. Her daughters were now to be introduced into life; and she felt that two marriageable young ladies were quite enough at a time in one family. Two young ladies might be admissible into small social parties, where three could not be thought of. Besides, Mrs. Bethel was prudently doubtful, how far it was proper to give Fanny a taste for gaieties and a condition of life that she had so slender a chance of permanently enjoying. Of her personal attractions she really was not afraid. A mother's vanity had probably blinded her to

what to every one else appeared her main reason for rarely producing her niece along with her daughters. The master of the Free Grammar School of Wincham, a *protegé* of Miss Whitstone's and an estimable young man, who had lately obtained the Lectureship of St. Nicolas, was understood to admire Fanny, and only to wait for some better piece of preferment to make his proposal in form; and Mr. Edmund, the artist, also a highly respectable young man, with remarkable talents, and one who, if properly introduced and pushed in London in the portrait-line, could not fail to realize a handsome income, and probably to keep a carriage, was believed to be deeply attached to his pupil; though Fanny herself, when questioned, denied the possibility of this attachment, even with tears. Mr. Edmund, she said, though at first he seemed to like her society, probably for the sake of Miss Whitstone's conversation, and from the love of his art, to which Fanny was for the time enthusiastically devoted, had been silent, distant, and almost studiously cold in his manners to her, particularly of late. He could have no thoughts of her.

"Well, child, there is no use crying about it, at any rate," said the aunt; "but, as I do not, on such grounds, give up my own opinion, I shall write to-night to Mr. Richard Taylor, inquiring farther about the gentleman." Fanny, horrified by the indelicacy of this proceeding, implored her aunt's forbearance, and protested again and again that Mr. Edmund's attentions to herself had been only those of a friend and amiable instructor, to one whom he considered merely as a child; but she betrayed so much emotion in her denial, that Mrs. Bethel, with one of her discomfiting, keen, worldly, penetrating looks, abruptly turned from her, and went to Miss Whitstone in the next room, whom she bluntly taxed with having suffered Fanny to entangle her affections with this "paragon painter." The accused lady as flatly disclaimed the instrumentality as Fanny herself could have done the deed; but she acknowledged that, if old signs held, Mr. Edmund, into whose praise she launched with animation, did seem, and that, indeed, for successive years he had seemed to feel a very deep interest in her young friend; and, moreover, that Fanny did not appear indifferent to his opinion of her.

Mrs. Dr. Bethel did not lose a post in inquiring into the character and professional prospects of Mr. Edmund; and I did not keep her an hour in suspense. The character of the gentleman was every thing that could render a reasonable and amiable woman—and, above all, one of the quiet, affectionate, and humble character of little Fanny Bethel—perfectly happy. His talents, as an artist, spoke for themselves—they were eminent—but his professional prospects depended entirely upon his own industry and perseverance. The answer was perfectly satisfactory to Mrs. Bethel; and she resolved to have an explanatory communing with Mr. Edmund next day; and wrote to him that, if every thing was as she imagined, she would not hesitate to give her sanction to his addresses to her niece, which she had no doubt would be followed by that of the family abroad.

Poor Fanny was in an agony of distress. She would, at the moment, have gladly consented never to see Mr. Edmund again in this world; never listen to his delightful conversation with Miss Whitstone; never again enjoy one of their social reading evenings, or one of those charming sketching rambles, in which his conversation was, if possible, still more captivating than at other times—though it was not easy to recall much of it—rather than that he should imagine her the indelicate, forward, unwomanly, vain girl, who had so grossly misconstrued and misrepresented his attentions, that he must now be subjected to the coarse questioning of her relatives.

This was certainly the most wretched day of Fanny Bethel's whole life. Twenty times she began to write to Mr. Edmund, protesting her own innocence, and her horror at the course her aunt had followed; but natural timidity, and the same delicacy of feeling which prompted this bold step, prevented its execution. She applied to Miss Whitstone, who was also become uneasy and perplexed between her young friends, though, upon the whole, pleased with the prospect of an explanation, which, she was assured, would produce satisfactory results.

"But, my dear Fanny," said this lady, with a certain air of benevolent humour—"let me exactly understand what I am to say to Mr. Edmund:—That you are not in love with him?—but that might have been left to my own discretion. Or is it that you do not believe—never did believe—nor ever will believe, that he is in love with you?"

Fanny wept from vexation. "Dear ma'am, I am sure you understand quite well what I mean."

"Indeed, I think I do—but cannot be

sure. But here comes Tom, who may help me. Do you know that all the gossips of Wincham are obligingly giving your sister Mr. Edmund as a lover, Tom?"

"And that she disclaims him as such, and the honour altogether," cried Tom petulantly.

"I do!—I do!" exclaimed Fanny. "Mr. Edmund think of me! Good heavens!—With his fine talents and genius, and thousand, thousand amiable qualities, to think of poor little me!—foolish me, who always feel like a child beside him, and who was never so happy as when long ago he treated me as one!"

"Confound your humility, Miss Fanny Bethel!" cried the Etonian. "It is somewhat out of place."

"How was it possible that Fanny could believe any man could admire so disagreeable and plain a little girl as herself?" said Miss Whitstone, laughing. "Yet, even in the case of Mr. Edmund, it is, in my humble judgment, a conquest she may very well be proud of, yet without doubting its absolute possibility."

"Proud, ma'am!" returned the fuming Etonian, only restrained from the violent expression of anger by his deep respect for Miss Whitstone. "Give me leave to say, ma'am, that, though any man—ay, any man in all England—might be proud of gaining the affections of Captain Bethel's daughter—of my sister Fanny, ma'am—I see no occasion for her being overpowered with gratitude for the attentions of any gentleman whatever, even although his birth and station in society entitled him to address her."

Poor Fanny had never in her life felt so self-abased as by this attempt to exalt her; and, almost inarticulately, she implored her brother to say no more on the subject, and gave way to another burst of tears; while Miss Whitstone, frankly extending her hand in amity to Tom, declared that they had come exactly to the same conclusion, though from different premises—"There was indeed no man in England, whatever his rank or fortune, who might not be proud of gaining the heart of little Fanny—by her own self, Fanny." Upon this, Tom kissed his sister, and playfully adopting the language of their childhood, promised to be "a good boy if Fanny would not cry *no* more."

There was thus the appearance of sunshine after showers, when Fortune, who delights in games of cross purposes, sent Mr. Edmund himself into the apartment, which he entered in some haste. Tom was still hanging over Fanny's chair, and Fanny had been in tears. The painter looked with interest to the brother and sister, and with meaning to Miss Whitstone, as if he required her permission to remain. She invited him to sit down; and Tom, with a sudden assumption of the dignity becoming the presumptive heir of the mortgaged acres of Bethel's Court, drew his sister's arm within his own, and, bowing slightly to Miss Whitstone, said, "I require Miss Bethel's presence in another apartment, ma'am." The lady smiled in mingled pity and amusement; but anxiety for Fanny was predominant over every other feeling, and she was glad when Mr. Edmund very naturally led to the subject, by remarking, with a smile, "Tom Bethel is in his altitudes to-night—but I am sure he loves his sister?"

"More than his life—I'll say that for him," returned Miss Whitstone: and a conversation was begun which Fanny fancied would never end, and during which Tom returned to his present head-quarters at the Rectory. When Fanny, after Mr. Edmund had withdrawn, ran in to say good-night to her friend, and, perhaps, to hear all she could hear without the direct inquiry she could not venture to make, Miss Whitstone informed her that Mr. Edmund was suddenly called away, and had left his farewell compliments for her, as he was to set off by the mail at midnight. Poor Fanny! Miss Whitstone was too generous to look at, much less to speak to her. She sent her away to search for a book; and Fanny returned in ten minutes, protesting that she was so thankful Mr. Edmund was to go, as this would disconcert the horrid scheme of her aunt Bethel.

Next morning, rather earlier than her usual hour, Fanny appeared at the bedside of her friend, looking pale, perhaps, though she seemed almost in flighty spirits, while she craved leave of absence for a morning's ramble in the woods of Bethel's Court, with only Patty Collins.

Before this plan—to which Miss Whitstone consented, with silent, meaning caresses, that drew grateful tears from her favourite—could be put in execution, Mrs. Bethel's carriage drove up to the door, with the whole family of the Rectory. Letters had been received that morning, announcing the death of Mrs. Bethel at Aix-la-Chapelle, an event which changed the whole prospects of the family, to whom her large independent fortune was thus completely lost. And Mr. Bethel might marry again, and Tom and

Henry thus be thrown back in the succession to even those poor remnants of the original property, which, meanwhile however, Mrs. Dr. Bethel had a shrewd notion were burdened beyond their yearly revenue.

While despatching notes, receiving condolences, and looking over silks and muslins, crapes and bombazeens, and giving orders for mourning, Mrs. Bethel could yet find time to notice, sarcastically, the precipitate retreat of Mr. Edmund, to whom she had intimated her wish for an interview and explanatory conversation at the Rectory.

"I cannot allow myself to believe that it is indifference to the subject of the intended conversation, which has made Mr. Edmund avoid you at this time, cousin; or any thing but the simple reason he has assigned — business. But I may refer to his note for your better information." Miss Whitstone handed the sealed letter intrusted to her to the lady to whom it was addressed, and who tore it open without farther ceremony, and rapidly skimmed the contents.

"Well, this is very proper now; and quite well expressed. He does propose for Fanny, or means to do so, as soon as he obtains the consent of her natural guardians. I can answer for Mr. Bethel—and as to myself.——Well, I am pleased at having brought the man to the point. This late heavy loss makes Fanny's marriage, in almost any respectable way, more than ever desirable. Her uncle will now have more than enough to do with himself. My own children are just at the age when the expenses of a family come to be seriously felt. How Tom's clerical education is now to be carried through, I cannot foresee. Perhaps your brother may get him to the university as a sizar—though the sea, to which he seems born, and for which he has so strong an inclination, might be better still."

There was but one reason against oversetting Tom's present views. If Fanny were once fairly married, and if Tom obtained one of the family livings, there might be a *pis-aller* for her youngest daughter. But, at present, she had a first duty to perform, and, snatching a pen, she instantly wrote her full consent and approbation of Mr. Edmund's addresses to her niece, with many well-turned compliments to himself, and phrases of maternal endearment in relation to Fanny. Miss Whitstone, having twice hinted, "Are you not precipitate, cousin, with the death of Mrs. Bethel so recent?" looked silently on, until the letter was folded, when she obtained an answer. "Not a bit too precipitate, cousin. The sooner little Fanny is settled the better. The small — the very small allowance her uncle has hitherto made me for her, must stop with the death of his wife; and this Mr. Edmund says, he must have three or four months to look out for a proper house, and so forth: — even if he be so far fortunate as to obtain the consent of my niece — of which, by the way, I dare say, he fancies himself tolerably certain — and the approbation of her relations — of which I now give him joyful assurance."

"And, in so doing, you make him a happy man, I am persuaded. But there is Tom Bethel to be consulted next — whose ideas of Fanny's deserts are so high and so just."

"Tom Bethel! — a headstrong, foolish boy! No, cousin, we may make Tom a bridesman; but to consult him about his sister's marriage is entirely out of the question. — But here comes Miss Collins. Now, I fancy something very slight and plain may do for Fanny's mourning, as she is so quiet at present with you; and we must save all we can, you know, for the *trousseau*."

Miss Whitstone allowed the lady to have it all her own way; though Tom, in a rage at afterwards finding his sister's mourning for their aunt scanty and much inferior in quality to that of his dashing cousins, remonstrated loudly upon that injustice — threw Fanny into a paroxysm of grief by his violence in her cause — and filled the ladies of the Rectory with such indignation that they upbraided him with ingratitude. This Tom denied; accusing Mrs. Bethel, in turn, of having made a *job* of his sister, for whom she had a handsome allowance, and a slave of her for so many years. The polite, politic Mrs. Bethel had never met with any thing so provoking in her whole life as this schoolboy affair. It became the talk of all Wincham; and Tom found numerous partisans, who seized the present opportunity of reviving the old story of Mrs. Dr. Bethel's secret bargain for the lion's share of the great tithes of Stockham-Magna. The controversy even went the length of mysterious paragraphs in the *Wincham Journal*; and was only ended by Tom becoming convinced, that, if it were carried farther, the affair would be Fanny's death. She was, indeed, looking so wretchedly ill, three months after the remains of her aunt had been brought home to be laid in the family vault, that, when Tom next came from school on a visit, he flew to Miss Whitstone's room, in the deepest distress, to

inquire if his sister was not in a consumption. Miss Whitstone hoped not. Fanny had not been well. She was in unequal spirits, and thinner, and paler; but without any decided ailment.

"She is pining for that fellow, Edmund," Tom cried, with a glowing face; "to whom her kind aunt, Bethel, would have given her with so little ceremony; and who does not seem in a hurry to claim the hand he once pretended to value so much. Forgive me, Miss Whitstone: you are the only human being, save Fanny herself, in whom I have confidence, or to whom I can look for sympathy. I am sure if I knew what was best for poor Fanny, to whom I owe every thing, I would do it, if it broke my own heart." And the subdued youth wept.

"That duty should not be heart-breaking, Tom. Your sister, with the tender and very uncommon ties that from babyhood have knit you together, would receive far more pleasure from your single approbation of her choice, than that of all her other relations put together. Your pride, Tom, or your prejudice, call it which you will, has been far more distressing to your sister than all her other trials. And you wrong Mr. Edmund: — he only waits her slightest intimation to fly to her; but while every week brought a fresh heroic epistle from you—indeed, you must forgive my freedom, Tom— what could the poor girl do? I assure you she has not wanted for my instigation to follow the dictates of her own heart and judgment, in a matter which looks like one of life or death to her."

"I know you entertain but an indifferent opinion of my understanding and knowledge of life, ma'am," said Tom, with some pique; "but I am sure you cannot doubt the sincerity of my love for my sister."

"If I did so, sir, I should not now be thus parleying with you," replied the lady with severity.

"Well, dear ma'am," returned Tom, insinuatingly, "you who love my own dear Fanny — that best, kindest, gentlest, sweetest of all sisters — so well, will you allow me one last experiment of a week's duration only? — And, if it fail, I promise to give my consent to Captain Bethel's daughter becoming an artist's wife." The heroic air with which this was said, provoked a smile on the placid and benevolent features of Miss Whitstone, in spite of herself; and, before she could speak, Testy Tom exclaimed, "You laugh at me, as a foolish, raw schoolboy; but I don't mind that, so that you trust me this once."

"Laugh at you, Tom! — no, surely — on the contrary, I am hand in glove with you; but may we learn the nature of your scheme, which I can have no doubt does equal honour to your fraternal affection, and Etonian acuteness?"

"You must not laugh at me, though," returned Thomas, his face mantling with the consciousness of possessing a delightful mystery — "I can bear *you* to laugh at me about any thing in the world, save this." And he took a letter from his pocket-book. "You won't guess who this is from: — my late aunt's heir, the Northern Bethel, as we have been used to call him. Ill as my uncle and the whole family have used him — neglected him like a poor relation, and hated him like an heir presumptive — he has behaved like an angel to my uncle Bethel. He has been at Aix-la-Chapelle to visit him; and one of *our* gentlemen (viz., an Eton boy) informs me that it is understood he is to allow my uncle to enjoy a full half of my late aunt's revenue for the remainder of his life. My uncle, you may be sure, was touched with this delicate generosity; for, beyond the term of her death, he was not, by law, entitled to draw one shilling. He has written me to be an attentive scholar, as he means to carry out the original plan of my education. But this letter" — and Tom struck it with his open fingers — "this is from that fine fellow, young Bethel himself, inviting me to Bethel's Court, which my uncle has given up to him as a residence, and saying the kindest things to me and Fanny, whom he begs to call his 'cousins.' Now, the beauty — the very cream of it — is, that he has not written to the Rectory people at all."

Tom's eyes sparkled with gratified revenge. "So it won't be madam, my aunt, who can either obtain for me and my friends, or refuse us, a day's shooting at Bethel's Court, in a hurry again — or act as if all its gardens, hot-houses, and vineries, were more hers and her daughter's, than poor Fanny's and mine."

Miss Whitstone, who had smiled all along, was now reading the letter, which she pronounced charming. "But, then, what has all this to do with delaying Mr. Edmund's answer a week, when the suspense is so hurtful to your sister's spirits, and so disrespectful to a person of whom we all have reason to think so highly as we do of Mr. Edmund?"

Tom suddenly recollected himself. "I shall tell *you*, only *you*, that, ma'am — for, wild dreamer as you may conclude me, I am sure you will not betray me; — I wish Fanny to see Mr. Bethel, before she irrevocably pledge her fate. I am told he is a very well-looking man, and an accomplished, perfect gentleman; and you know, when a man comes to his property, he always thinks of marrying."

"At any rate, I am sure you will, Tom," said the smiling lady. "But what then?"

"What then? Dear ma'am, you are not wont to be so dull of apprehension: — if, which I think extremely likely, he should fancy our own Fanny!"

Miss Whitstone laughed heartily over Tom's basket of unhatched chickens; but looked in such good humour, that Tom durst not resent the liberty; and she atoned for all, by vowing that she knew not where the new inhabitant of Bethel's Court could find any wife half so charming or half so worthy of him. "And to have her, sweetest creature, so near me, too!" said the old lady, actually melting into delicious tears at Tom's hair-brained scheme. "But, poor Mr. Edmund!" she sighed, at last, but yet smiled as she looked to Tom. "Poh! — never mind, my dear ma'am: I assure you *we*, lords of creation, are by no means so inconsolable upon such occasions as you ladies sometimes flatter yourselves. He shall get young Mrs. Bethel's picture to paint, at five hundred guineas: and, perhaps, if he wait ten years, my aunt, who admires him so much for Fanny, will give him my cousin Harriet."

Tom permitted Miss Whitstone to tell his sister the conditions upon which his brotherly approbation was to be obtained to her marriage:—namely, if she did not prefer Mr. Bethel in one week, or failed to make a conquest of him in one month. Tom now stipulated that it should be a full month after that gentleman's arrival; but he was hourly expected. Even with this distorted prospect of a haven, Fanny rather improved in spirits; for there was no chance of any one falling in love with her — she was sure of that——and as for her fidelity!—

Tom did the best he could to cheer her, and get her into good looks and proper training, before the important first interview.

Next day, cards were issued, by Mrs. Dr. Bethel, to the relatives and such neighbours as she deemed proper for Mr. Bethel's acquaintance, for a welcoming dinner at Bethel's Court, to be followed by a ball to the tenants and a few friends. Tom swelled with indignation in the knowledge that his aunt assumed to manage this entertainment—at the owner's expense, however — and, at once, to take Fanny's intended lover into her own dexterous hands.—He vowed to circumvent her.

When the day of the entertainment came, Fanny was so nervous and distressed that there was no need to feign the headach which she pleaded as an excuse for absence in the note sent to her aunt, by whom her illness was very graciously lamented. Mrs. Dr. Bethel did not approve of distracting a young gentleman's affections by too many fair objects at the same time. He had his choice of Harriet, the stately and *stylish*, and Frances, the lively and pretty, with the different foils her maternal cares had collected in the neighbourhood.

From the quarrel originating in the family mourning, Tom had not once crossed the threshold of the Rectory. He lived with a family in the vicinity of Bethel's Court, but beyond it in relation to Wincham, and only arrived in that town to see his sister receive those finishing touches in dress from Miss Collins' own hands, and those of the most fashionable friseur in the place, which he had bespoken; and to attend her to the grand scene of display.

What was Tom's horror — and, in spite of all his tenderness, his anger — to find his beauty of the night, languid, pale, exhausted, and bearing deep traces of suffering and recent tears! He scolded, he kissed, he coaxed in turns. Surely she would go with him to the ball? "It was not too late for that, though they might miss dinner. She might even lie down for an hour to refresh herself, and recover her looks. Their allies, the Taylors, and her particular correspondent and admirer, Mr. Richard, were come down, and would be so rejoiced to see her."

"I know all that," returned Fanny; "but with them came Mr. Edmund! Indeed, indeed, Tom — dear brother — you must not force me out to-night."

Tom looked aghast at her information, and muttered what sounded in her ears as curses of her lover. Spite of her gentleness, this was more than Fanny could endure. "I will not hear this!" she exclaimed passionately, and becoming deadly pale, as if about to faint; and Tom, overcome and alarmed, implored her forgiveness, and brought Miss Whitstone to mediate for him, and restore Fanny. Tom began to fancy that there might be, even among girls, affections too

strong and deep to be fully understood by the wits of Eton. Fanny, who had never denied any request of Tom's in her whole life, however unreasonable in itself, was not slow to accord her forgiveness, deeply and indelibly as his conduct had wounded her heart; and no sooner was he pardoned than, like a true man, he returned to his original point:—"Would she not confirm his pardon by granting his request—to appear with him when he was first presented to Mr. Bethel—whose good opinion and friendship might be so important to his future prospects?" Tom now pleaded on the score of prudence, and as if for the greatest personal favour; and Miss Whitstone at last joined him. "Indeed, my love, I think you might gratify Tom this once, since he has set his heart upon it—with so many old friends to see too—and the new master of Bethel's Court might, I flatter myself, miss his young cousins."

"Cousins a hundred and fifty times removed," said Fanny, almost pettishly. But, with her natural sweetness, she added—"Since you rule it so, ma'am, I shall prepare." And as she rose, Tom kissed her over and over, and ran himself to the perfumers for as much rose-water to take away the redness about her eyes, as might have half-drowned her. His charges to Miss Collins and Patty, who were now both summoned by Tom as assistant dressers, were, "Now, don't let Miss Bethel make a dowdy of herself." And when the dressing was finished, though Patty declared that, in that clear muslin frock and white satin slip, she looked like an angel, Tom found her not half like enough to a "Fashion of the Month" to please him. Her gloves did not fit, and her slippers—far too large for her—were, indeed, what it would have made Tom mad to know, misfits of her cousin Fanny's, sent to her in economy. Then her ringlets drooped too long and hung too free. Fashionable girls wore their hair at present *so*——Tom could not name it, but he endeavoured to imitate the thing he meant; and Miss Collins joined in opinion with him; while Patty cried—"Oh no! Those lovely flowing ringlets which Mr. Edmund thinks so charming a style for Miss Bethel!" Tom would not curse now; but it cost him an effort to be tranquil, while he inquired why Fanny did not wear her pearls with the ruby clasps—her mother's beautiful pearls, which had been preserved for her; and he requested her, at least on this gala night, to gratify him by using those ornaments. They were at the Rectory. "Then, we shall call round till you get them—and your mother's beautiful Cachmere too:—and then, if *our* Fanny—hey, Miss Whitstone!—cannot be so fashionable as Aunt Bethel's bedizened beauties, she shall be as expensively attired."

"Now, Tom, my dear boy, keep your temper," said the lady addressed. "I was almost as angry with Fanny's simplicity yesterday, as you could have been; and even more angry with the encroaching, selfish temper of my cousin, who chose to display the shawl to advantage on Harriet's fine figure, and contrast the strings of pearls with her own Fanny's dark tresses. Let us hope that the principal beaux to-night—those worth killing, I mean—believe, though the belief grows every day more rare, 'that loveliness needs not'—you all remember it. At least, my love, if the gentlemen of Bethel's Court don't admire you just as you are, be assured that Patty, and myself, and Mr. Edmund will—and Mr. Tom also."

"And that is all I care for," said the distracted Fanny, taking leave. "But how I wish this night were over, and I was back to you!—but don't you sit for me."

"Nay, I shall sit. You know, I am this night to give you, and Mr. Edmund, and friend Tom there, if he choose, and Mr. Richard Taylor, my very old friend, a *petit soupér*, of sago and small negus, in my own chamber, in the style of the Old Court."

"Don't wait *us*, pray, ma'am," cried Tom, pulling his sister's arm within his own, tolerably well pleased, or reconciled to Fanny's dress, and fancying her ringlets not unbecoming after all, and tolerably confident that she must captivate Mr. Bethel if she would only let herself out. His kind encouragement, and thanks for exertion to oblige him, and a drive in the quiet starlight, with Tom's arm around her, tended to tranquillize Fanny's spirits. "It is but a few more hours," she whispered to herself—"and then but a few days; and as soon as poor Tom, who does all these cruel things from the truest, though the most mistaken, love for me, learns to know Mr. Edmund, as he cannot fail soon to be known, we shall be so happy, with again a home, a fireside of our own—a happiness we have never known from infancy. I shall be so glad to see the Taylors, too, who were so kind to us in childhood." And she said aloud—"You remember the Brunswick Square Taylors, Tom, who were so kind to us when we came from India?"

"Well—and also who gave you that famous

Frau Jansen which Harriet robbed you of, as she has to-night of your Cachmere. By Heavens! if I saw her hanging on Mr. Bethel's arm in that shawl, I would almost pluck it from her shoulders."

The carriage was now within the extensive grounds of Bethel's Court; and at every opening of the trees, or curve of the long winding approach, glimpses of the illuminated mansion were alternately caught, and again darkened in shadow or lost in total obscurity. Though the Allahbad Bethels had now resided for more than twelve years in this vicinity, neither of them had ever before seen the cheerful, life-giving sight of evening lights in their ancestral home. The house stood rather low, by the river, which made so fine a feature in the home landscape; and, as they passed through the thick obscurity of the neighbouring groves, they found the old hereditary rooks startled from their nests, wheeling overhead, and cawing in terror. When the full sweep of the low, wide, blazing architectural front burst upon them, every object touched by the magic of light and shadow, Tom Bethel, in the high-wrought enthusiasm of the moment, pressed his sister more closely to his side, and exclaimed, "My own darling Fanny! could I but once see you the mistress of that house, I would give up every wish, surmount every care, for myself." And Tom was not more insincere than thousands of brothers and mothers have been before him, who, in pursuing their own half-selfish ambition, fancy they are making amazing sacrifices to promote the happiness of the being they torment.

The aristocracy of the party were leaving the drawing-room to proceed to the saloon — as the old stone hall had been new-named — to open the ball, as Tom Bethel's chaise drove up; and, amid the blaze of flambeaux without, and lamps within, he perceived, far off, his aunt, and his cousin Harriet, in the Cachmere, conducted by a gentleman, whom he rightly concluded the master of the mansion.

"They've hooked him already, by all that's sacred!" whispered Tom. "O, Fanny! why would you not come sooner? But, for any sake, now, don't be foolish—don't tremble so, you dear little fool." He lifted her out, and they entered the hall. Mr. Bethel and his ladies had paused in crossing, at the far end of the hall, to examine some of that rare quaint rich carving in wood, still to be found in a few ancient English mansions, and for which England was at one time so celebrated. His party, and those approaching them, were still separated by a short flight of marble steps, running across the hall; so that, while Fanny and her brother were below, Mr. Bethel stood as it were upon a platform, or *dais*, with his back to those advancing. It was with difficulty that Tom, with his supporting arm round her waist, dragged his sister up these few steps; but, upon the last, she sunk on her knees, and leaned upon his shoulder; while, moved, as if by an instinctive feeling of her presence — for he could scarcely have seen her — Mr. Bethel disengaged himself from the arms of mother and daughter, and flew to Fanny's assistance.

"Very well, indeed!" said the younger lady, with a sneer. "If Fanny be late, she is determined to make a sensation when she does come." But Mrs. Bethel advanced to the group. Fanny had not fainted. She held the hands of her brother Tom and Mr. Edmund in her own, while her beautiful face, now richly suffused with rosy bloom, breathed the rapture of a spirit that first sees unfolded the gates of Paradise.

Though I had not seen Little Fanny Bethel for so many years—standing where she stood, and looking as she then looked, and knowing all I knew, I recognised her in the instant, and introduced myself. Then turning to Tom, after a friendly shake of his disengaged hand, I claimed the privilege, as a common acquaintance, of introducing Mr. Edmund Bethel to Mr. Thomas Bethel. All his Etonian self-possession could not sustain Tom at this instant. His face became of twenty colours, the burning crimson of shame predominating, and remaining fixed on his brow.

"Oh, what a fool I have been! — what a monster to my poor Fanny! — who, while she has fifty times my goodness, has a hundred times my sense." Mr. Bethel, without exactly hearing or caring to hear these words, shook hands most cordially with Tom, "his cousin" — to whom he "hoped soon to be more nearly allied," he whispered; and Fanny smiled like an angelic being.

"Fanny, my dear," said the advancing Mrs. Bethel, "what tempted you to brave the night air? I shall positively send you back with the carriage which has brought you —"

"Oh, do, dear ma'am!" returned Fanny, who found this proposal the greatest possible relief in the present state of her feelings.

"Leave my niece to my management, Mr. Bethel," continued the bustling lady; "I shall chide cousin Whitstone well, I assure

you, for letting her abroad. Come, Fanny, dear, I shall send Hopkins, my own maid, home with you."

"I will attend my sister home," cried Tom Bethel.

"I must be permitted that honour," cried Mr. Bethel. "My friendly guests, to whom I am quite a stranger—save, I dare say, that I have painted staring portraits of some of them—will gladly take Tom and Mr. Henry as my gay substitutes in their revel!"

Mrs. Bethel stared. "I would give up my claim for no man living, save Mr. *Edmund* Bethel," was my rejoinder.

Mrs. Bethel started! and looked from one to another. The truth flashed upon her mind. She had overshot the mark. Exquisite dissembler as she was, it was impossible altogether to conceal her feelings upon this singular turn of fortune. Tom Bethel gloated upon the passionate working and twitching of his aunt's features. He ran himself to inform Harriet, that Mr. Edmund, the painter, whose addresses to his sister had lately been urged on by her mother, was none other than Mr. Edmund Bethel! Her stifled scream of surprise was music to him.

It was finally settled that Mr. Bethel and myself should attend Fanny to Wincham, while Tom and Henry Bethel, who were every way qualified, should do the honours of the rustic ball. I pretended a love of free air and star-gazing, and desired to sit without; and, though Fanny pleaded and protested that I would catch cold, I persisted, —and I hope she forgave my obstinacy. She ran to Miss Whitstone—smiling, benevolent, happy Miss Whitstone—as we entered the house; and playfully chided her for having so mystified them, and allowed Tom to commit himself. "Poor Tom is still so young, poor fellow!" said she, stealing at Mr. Bethel one of her old childish looks of innocent fascination,—"and he loves me so truly!"

"And that affection might cover a multitude of sins, were they ten times worse than those of poor Tom," returned Mr. Bethel. "Be assured, I forgive his no-offence to myself most sincerely. Indeed, Fanny, I grudged you to a poor painter as much as Tom could himself have done, though that painter was myself!"

Nothing could be better said; and few explanations were required. Mr. Edmund Bethel had wished to spend a summer near Bethel's Court, and had found inducements to return another and another. It seems I had, among so many Bethels, introduced him as Mr. Edmund, and he kept by the half-name given him. The marriage took place in a month afterwards, to the entire satisfaction of all Wincham and Stockham-Magna—so universal a favourite was Fanny. It was, perhaps, the only marriage ever contracted under such flattering auspices; for even Mrs. Bethel was with the majority. She very properly said that, if she had consented while Fanny's lover was an obscure person, how rejoiced she must be now to find him one so different!

On the day of his sister's marriage, Tom obtained an appointment as midshipman in his Majesty's navy. He is now a lieutenant, and has lost, with much of his Latin and Greek, a great deal of his Etonian refinement and knowledge of the world.

FRANKLAND THE BARRISTER.

With prospects bright upon the world he came,
Pure love of virtue, strong desire of fame;
Men watched the way his lofty mind would take,
And all foretold the progress he would make.

CRABBE.

Of the lost friends that have the most deeply interested my feelings in my solitary journey through life, I have a dim and melancholy pleasure in recalling my first impressions and earliest sentiment. I strive to revive the look, the attitude, the tone of voice, the individualized image, as it was seen in that peculiar aspect of the human physiognomy which can be beheld but twice —first when we see the living man, with awakened attention; and again, when we gaze upon the death-fixed, marble features of the recent corpse.

I have rarely met with any individual, even of the other sex, who, at first sight, made altogether a more favourable impression upon me, than Mr. James Charles Frankland; yet I rather pique myself on not being very impressible by outward shows and signs; nor easily captivated by either man or woman.

I can well remember that Frankland and myself first met in the pit of Drury Lane

Theatre, about the middle of a season rendered memorable by the management of Lord Byron. From the period when Johnson and Burke, Topham Beauclerk and Reynolds, went to "the first nights" of Goldsmith's comedies, the playhouse had not been so attractive to a certain order of literary loungers, as in this year, when the presence of Byron and his friends drew together, almost every night, crowds of hangers-on, young templars, coffee-house critics, and fledgling poets "about town." At the head of a rather numerous circle of this well-understood, but not very describable, fluctuating body, was Frankland; "among them, but not of them"—already a brilliant name in their order, and the main link which connected its youth of promise with the higher literary gradation of the Hunts, and Hazlitts, and Lambs.

Frankland was, at the same time, honourably known to the stars of the Byron box, who shone a nightly constellation, and the sun of the lesser lights that now occupied the critical bench of the pit, upon the first and last representation of Jack Greene's Runeymede, or Fair Rosamond, (I really forget which,) a tragedy. To the dramatist, who was fluttering, in a dreadful state of nervous excitement, from the pit and gallery, to the boxes, I owed the honour of my introduction to the distinguished young barrister, who remained surrounded during the whole evening by a crowd of juvenile idolaters, watching his every look and tone, and picking up the crumbs of wit and criticism that fell from his table, to be doled out to their different admiring circles. Without a particle of arrogance in his manner, which, though highly polished, was manly and simple, I could perceive that Frankland was somewhat disdainful of the flock of worshippers, who, in the genius, eloquence, and acquirements of the man who illustrated their class, foresaw a future Burke, Erskine, or Brougham; and, beyond all doubt, if not an entire and perfect Chancellor, yet a very eminent Attorney-general—"Unless his politics prove a bar to his advancement," whispered a fellowcraft, and one of his admirers. "Frankland is thoroughly liberal—a speculative Republican at the least."

"No insurmountable obstruction that, if one may judge of his profession by past experience," I returned. I presume my remark was overheard; for my new acquaintance turned round and honoured me with a scrutinizing and rather sharp glance.

"The only doubt at one time was, whether literature or politics were to engross all of the man that law will spare," continued my whispering informer; "but politics have fairly turned the scale:—you have read that famous series of papers in *The Chronicle* under the signature Philo Junius?—Well—but mum—an under-secretary was employed by Castlereagh to fish out the writer."

Perhaps this was also overheard; and I had smiled in such a sort, as to irritate the sensitive pride of Frankland, who turned abruptly to us, saying, "Am I not a fortunate man, Mr. Taylor; surrounded as I am by a phalanx of young friends, who speak, write, flatter, nay, almost *lie* me into fame.—I must, however, do the Treasury the bare justice to say, that, if it has ever done me the honour to put a price upon my head, I am still ignorant of its benevolent intentions.—I am afraid his Majesty's Government has become singularly indifferent to the effusions of Aristides, Publicola, Vetus, and all the rest of us. A single vexatious motion in the House by Joseph Hume—the mute eloquence of a table of figures—a slap at sinecures and pensions—affect them more at this time than would all the philippics of Demosthenes.

"But to your duty, gentlemen. I foresee Fair Rosamond's trial is to be short and sharp—the audience is about to play Queen Eleanor with her: how goes it in the rare old ballad—

> With that she dashed her on the lips,
> So dyed double red—
> *Hard* was the hand that dealt the blow,
> *Soft* were the lips that bled."

Our prescribed duty was to applaud, right or wrong, and without rhyme or reason, the tragedy which Frankland had unhesitatingly and sternly condemned and endeavoured to stifle in the birth; though kindness for its author had brought him from his chambers to sit out the unhappy play, and countenance the more unhappy writer.

It had been brought forward from reasons more creditable to the good-nature, than to the judgment or critical taste of the noble manager; who, during the third act, seeing the "deep damnation" inevitable, was among the first of the audience visibly to give way to the overwhelming sense of the ludicrous. This was not Frankland's style of backing his friends. A sudden compression of the lips, and knitting of the brow, marked his quick feeling of indignation, as the curtain

fell amidst the open laughter of the amateur managers and the critics, and the yet smaller creatures who fluttered around them, and those throughout the house, who caught their tone from that Pandora's box.

The unfortunate author, a young man of weak character and amiable feeling, was so overpowered by his disgrace, as actually to weep behind Frankland's shoulder, while he whispered regret at not following his counsels and suppressing the unlucky play.

A single trait revealed to me much of the inner character of my new acquaintance, as a single lightning-flash will momentarily disclose the depths of a ravine which the sun's rays can never penetrate. A message was brought by one of the volunteer gentlemen ever in waiting upon Byron, requesting Mr. Frankland to come round to the Green Room, where "his Lordship" was with Kean and the distinguished persons who had been induced to witness the play. There might be a touch of pride and caprice in the refusal; but, I believe, indignant generosity was the prevailing sentiment, when Mr. Frankland briefly stated in excuse an engagement with Mr. Greene. An amended summons came back — Lord Byron particularly requested to see Mr. Greene also; and the discomfited poet would have sneaked along, had not the other held him, crying, "No, by heavens! you sha'n't, Jack."— The woful dramatist, who, from their schoolboy days, had never dreamed of resisting the impetuous resolution of his friend Frankland, at once submitted.

The engagement with Greene proved a tavern supper, into which I allowed myself to be for once seduced; so much had I been captivated by what I had seen of the young lawyer, and amused by his satellites.

Cordial and confidential as Frankland and I finally became, our friendship was of slow growth. A full quarter century makes a difference between man and man; and, though Frankland was a ripe man of his twenty-seven years, he was not one of those that "wear the heart upon the sleeve for daws to peck at." It was not until a much later period of our acquaintance, that he was so far thrown off the guard constantly maintained by his sensitive pride, as once to tell me, in a tone of self-complacency which it was impossible to misunderstand, that Byron, piqued by the indifference shown to the flattering attentions of one so privileged and so *prerogatived* as his capricious Lordship, had complained to a common literary friend, that Frankland, whom he had known at Cambridge, was the only man, resting his claims in society upon genius and personal merit alone, who had ever repelled him.

I almost sympathized in the pride of my young friend; for it was now a time when talents and merit demanded indemnity from the frequent accesses of temper, caprice, and arrogance of the poet, who never forgot the peer; and who lived in continual apprehension, lest others should, in the man of splendid genius, forget the disquieting circumstance of his accidental rank. I less liked Byron's reported sneering addition — "The young liberal, no doubt, fancies himself vastly independent; Frankland thinks it quite heroic to despise a lord: — stop till he needs a silk gown, or becomes Tory Attorney-general — in expectancy." This was laughingly told me; but I liked it not. The future author of *Beppo* and *Don Juan*, read men's vanities, selfishnesses, and besetting weaknesses, but too fluently; and, even when I could have pledged my soul's peace upon the integrity of Frankland, I was haunted by the insidious prophecy.

There was this common resemblance between the struggling young lawyer and the idolized peer, that both had rashly appeared in nonage before the world as poets: but it went no farther; for Frankland had met with a reception that would infallibly have ruined any youth of feebler character or of moderate vanity. His rapidly-ripening judgment and fastidious taste, soon perceived the worthlessness of his juvenile productions; and, at twenty-three, had it been possible to have swept into oblivion every poem printed for seven previous years, so as to have annihilated the remembrance of his early humiliation, which had now made a five years' "eternal blazon" in albums, poets' corners, and *souvenirs*, his pride would gladly have received the sacrifice. Censure he could have endured. Laughed at, he could have laughed again, however scornfully; but the crude, inane criticism — the faint, and still more the fulsome praise — the vulgar indiscriminate compliments — the insufferable airs of the small dealers out of fame — the patronage of the drawing-rooms — disgusted and almost maddened him, in the reflection that the enthusiasm of the senseless boy had voluntarily subjected the man to such mortification.

Before we became acquainted, he had outlived this second burning stage, and could even bear to laugh at, and rally himself upon

those collateral absurdities in so many men's lives, a first love and a first volume of verse. As he could not expel the poetical elements with which nature had so strongly imbued his mind, he had given them what he thought a nobler or a more manly direction; and I have sometimes wondered how a man so far above the ordinary social vanities, should have taken so much pleasure in the exercise of astonishing conversational powers, and what seemed premeditated displays of eloquence. Oratory is, in one sense, as much an original gift of nature as the talent of personation, or the endowment of a fine voice: I mean in that sense in which George Whitefield, or some nameless preacher among the Ranters, was a greater natural orator than Burke or Fox. To the intellect, and fine and ductile imagination of Frankland, nature had superadded this power, which art had highly cultivated and embellished, until his jealous sense of personal dignity, fastidious refinement, and disdainful temper, awakened the morbid apprehension of being mistaken for a spouter, a speechifier, a political charlatan; which came in place of his former impatient scorn of being known as the author of "those delightful morsels," *Weeds and Wildflowers*, and of *Gems from the Antique*.

His horror at being celebrated as the author of that crack article *in Colburn for May last*, had given place to equal horror of being mistaken for a man seeking to obtrude himself on public notice, and to advance his fortunes by vulgar arts. Under this idea, he had withdrawn himself from the friendly clubs and debating or literary societies of his former associates; who now perceived that, out of the Courts, Mr. Frankland would not henceforth seek to sway, by his persuasive eloquence, any assembly less distinguished than his Majesty's Faithful Commons. The Opposition benches were imagined the immediate goal of his ambition. And what a figure Frankland would make in Parliament! was the current language of his admiring associates; and Frankland had some intimations of the same kind, that were even stronger than those which had made him a poet and a contributor of "crack articles" to the Reviews and Magazines;—not that he overestimated his own powers: his error lay, not in an overweening opinion of himself, but in the morbidly acute perception and scornful temper which led him to strip away the false pretensions, unveil the mean motives, and rate, at their very lowest value, the men who might become his rivals—those more seeming-fortunate men with whom he disdained to measure himself in intellectual stature, and who won their way either by truckling subservience, or by the sacrifice of that lofty feeling of independence and self-sustaining pride of integrity, which he held the noblest personal attributes of man. With what fiery indignation and withering scorn, have I heard him denounce the trucklers and trimmers of the time—the paltry deserters of their early opinions—the compound knaves and fools, whom a mean and narrow view of immediate interests drew into the betrayal of their true interests! Of such abject creatures, he said, his own profession, above all others, was ever fruitful: contemptible apostates, who bartered the bright jewel of fame, the proudest conquests of intellect, for, perhaps, some paltry place:—pitiful traitors to mankind and themselves, who blazoned their infamy on coronets!

A little more indulgence for others, and far more humility and self-distrust for himself, would have been wisdom in my young untempted friend.

I need not say, that Frankland, notwithstanding his great abilities and eloquence, and competent knowledge of his profession, was not the character to make rapid way among old cautious technical men of business and well-employed solicitors, who looked with wholesome distrust upon his supposed habits of literary composition, and accordingly gave him much less credit than he really deserved for indefatigable attention to whatever briefs he was so fortunate as to obtain. He was of too manly and honourable a character not to execute well whatever was intrusted to him, independently of other motives. But he was known to have been guilty of both poetry and fiction; to have scribbled in periodical works in his greener years, and, what was worse, with applause; and even when his sound professional knowledge was tardily forced upon their conviction, Frankland still wanted the kind of acceptance, or *status*, which, to a lawyer, comes as much by time and chance, and assiduous and patient cultivation, as from superior abilities.

As a means to an end, Frankland had now, for some years, spared no pains in qualifying himself for the exercise of his profession. In it his honour, his interest, his ambition, were concentrated: but still success came tardily. He saw duller, but more conciliatory and practical men, greater adepts in the homely arts of life, continually stepping before him; while he stood aside,

haughty, and almost scowling — too proud to push and jostle in the race, or even to come into contact with the vulgar herd of inferior competitors. Yet he could not, in any instance, be accused of actual neglect or inattention: punctual in the courts — year after year faithful to that everlasting western circuit, in which he did not clear his travelling expenses — he could be blamed for nothing save the indomitable pride which helped to close against him many of the ordinary avenues to fortune.

In the progress of our intimacy, I came to learn that Frankland's originally narrow patrimony had been nearly expended upon his education; his guardians deeming the acquirement of a liberal profession, to a youth of such endowments, the best manner of laying out a small fortune. And, as I walked with my eyes open, I knew the world too well to require being told, in as many words, that a shower of briefs, however thin, would have been acceptable to my friend; especially about the season when London tradesmen humbly intimate to their customers, that something more substantial is looked for, once or twice a-year, than the mere pleasure of executing their commands. But I did not yet know all the reasons which made even a moderate rate of professional emolument desirable. Often as I had called at his chambers "in soft twilight," I had never once found Frankland sighing over a miniature, or inditing poetry; but I too often found him among his law-books and papers, pale, and dispirited even to despondency, and I flattered myself that the consolations of my homely practical philosophy were strengthening to his mental health; and that the sincere flatteries of my partial friendship, which pointed to brighter days, soothed his irritable pride.

I have never known a man whom it required so much finesse and dexterity to flatter; and indeed finesse and dexterity could not have succeeded. The homage of his young admirers he received as a matter of course; — compliments in the ordinary strain, he despised too much to resent their impertinence; but he came to bear my admiration, and to feel it sit pleasantly upon him, as he perceived that I could appreciate his character, and at least understand, if I could not approve, those delicate abstractions and refinements which sometimes made him unreasonable and unhappy, and allow for that querulous pride with which I could not sympathize.

Even while execrating, for Frankland's sake, the jargon, the dry technicalities, and mazy intricacies, and the whole forms and practice which made law a ready way to fortune with inferior men, I never abated in my exhortations on the wisdom of taking the thing as it was found, and making the best of it; and of persevering till the tide turned. And still I hoped that some splendid occasion might arrive—some affair of national importance—some principle of right to be protected against power, by truth, and knowledge, and eloquence — which must fix the eyes of the world upon my friend, and at once stamp his title to the high place which nature had disqualified him for crawling to, by the slow, sure, slimy advances of some of his rivals.

The Hour came—and the Man was ready. It could, however, neither have been hope of gain nor yet of great professional distinction, that first induced Frankland to take up the singular case of his old school-fellow, Jack Greene, the author of the unlucky tragedy. It was, indeed, one too desperate for any well-employed counsel to engage in. The simple fellow, while he had lived on a small annuity left him by his father, was, though no conjuror, never once suspected of greater folly than a hundred other men who conduct their own affairs in a way with which no one assumes a right to intermeddle. But, unexpectedly, Jack fell heir to a considerable fortune. He might have been a little excited by the acquisition, but certainly not to the length which authorized, in "the next of kin," (two married sisters,) the discovery that he was insane, unfit to manage his own affairs, and fully qualified for the custody of a mad doctor.

I am not aware if the horrible law is yet mitigated, by which sordid relatives, after a very brief process, and upon obtaining — easy document — the certificate of two medical men, can consign an unfortunate individual to a common mad-house, and thus do much to render him the maniac which it may suit their cruel and selfish purposes to represent him. But this dangerous law existed a few years back in full force, and does, I believe, still exist, in a land where so much is every day heard about the sacredness of person and property. All at once Greene disappeared, and it was believed he had gone to the Continent, when a curious letter, which he had prevailed with a discarded keeper to bring to London, informed Frankland of his condition. This singular epistle, which con-

sisted of a very few words of Latin, pricked with a pin on a piece of strongly-glazed linen—the lining of his hat, as I remember—bore no token of insanity; but very different, I confess, was the impression made on me by the raving communication received, when Frankland, by the same messenger, contrived to write him, and supply him with a pencil and paper.

This second was too surely, I thought, a madman's letter. Frankland would not believe so. At all events, it was not less certain that the poor fellow was, at worst, a perfectly harmless, crazy poet; who had, for the first twenty-eight years of his life, never walked into a draw-well; and that he might to its close have been allowed wits sufficient to manage his small income at his own discretion. This he, indeed, had done with remarkable integrity and economy, driving hard bargains with his printers; though the grave charge remained of employing their services at all, instead of falling into the more usual modes of a young man's expenditure. Had he raced, or gamed, or kept mistresses, no charge could have been brought against Greene's wits; but barely keeping a decent coat on his back, he had preferred printing very bad poetry of his own composition, and paying the cost; and no English jury could sanction such conduct in a man pretending to be sane. I confess, as I have said, that I gave him up myself, when I read his second letter, which out-Leared Lear in raving quotation, and original bursts of poetic imprecation upon his two unnatual sisters—Betsy in particular, the younger, to whom he had affectionately dedicated his first volume, in four stanzas in the Spenserian measure, and who to that volume had contributed those touching lines—"*To my Brother's Fishing-Rod*"—Betsy, now, indeed, a wife and mother, yet surely not for these extended charities the less susceptible of sisterly tenderness, to join with the rest in consigning him to a mad-house—"for life! for life!—to stripes, a strait waistcoat, and the denial of pen and ink!"

There was so strange a jumble of the ludicrous and the pathetic in poor Jack's rhapsody, that Frankland himself acknowledged, that, if he had not known Greene from boyhood, he might, like me, have set down this raving for the effusion of a lunatic; but after declaiming against the enormous injustice, the dreadful oppression to which the law regarding lunacy gives facility, he pictured so many whimsical imaginary cases of madness which might be made out against many of our mutual acquaintances, had it been any object to make them victims; and instanced so many glaring and laughable proofs of my own lunacy, that I was compelled to admit that Greene might be no more insane than he had ever been, unless torture and terror, acting upon a feeble mind and weak nerves, had goaded him to madness.

Next to some great political question involving the permanent interests of society, this was a case, independently of private feelings, to absorb the whole mind of a man like Frankland. In it were involved the most subtle metaphysical and scientific discussion, and also the fundamental principles of justice and of jurisprudence. While his faculties and knowledge were tasked to the utmost by the complicated questions to which this case gave rise, his sympathies were pledged to the protection of humanity in its dearest and most delicate relations—and his spirit was roused to guard society against an evil which threatened to subvert the very foundation of social life; which undermined the household hearth, broke up the family compact, and converted the charities of kindred into deadly hate, and the blessings of domestic life into its bale. There was a power permitted by this law, which, under the impulse of sordid or interested feeling, became perilous and ruinous alike to the innocent victim and the guilty betrayer; a power most dangerous to frail human nature. Poor Greene's favourite sister had withheld her consent to the measures taken against him, until she became apprehensive that he would marry, and thus might deprive her children of their share of the unexpected fortune.

"Her virtue or her affection could not resist the contingency of Greene marrying the Laura of his juvenile sonnets," said Frankland to me, "and appropriating his wealth to his own purposes: every thing might have been forgiven him but that. I should not be surprised if his design of marrying the girl who made gowns for his sisters, is not brought forward on the trial as a proof of insanity, and a reason for his fortune and person being sequestered."

"Can these harpies be so unnatural, so unutterably base, knowing all the while their brother to be sane?" was my indignant exclamation.

"O, no!—not quite so bad—they are sisters and Christian gentlewomen," was Frankland's reply, made in that subdued voice which gave such thrilling effect to his

simplest words. "They do believe him mad, doubtless;—the alchemy of gold can work stranger conversions than this. Look around you," we were walking in the Park, then filled with gay company,—"have we not seen it harden the heart of the child against the mother, and turn the mother's milk to gall—convert doubt into faith, and faith into denial—make an unprincipled pensioner of —— and a titled prostitute of ——!" He pointed to two of the "distinguished persons" glittering before us.—"Horrible passion! which, beyond all others, shows the human heart—ay, even woman's, the pure, the kind, the *household* heart!—to be, indeed, 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.'"

"Horrible indeed! but are you not now confounding the sordid craving, to which these wretched sisters have yielded, with the equally fatal temptations to which the most generous natures are exposed, especially among the refined classes of an improvident and spendthrift society. That illustrious pensioner, that admired and beautiful woman, now glittering before us, yielded, as I apprehend, rather to the overpowering necessity of obtaining money, than to the mere love of gold for its own sake. Even with occasional cases like this of Greene's, the law protects our fortunes tolerably well, against the cupidity and fraud of those about us; but, Frankland, what power less than our own strong will, our own established virtue, founded upon the sure, if homely foundation of good habits, industry, and economy—shall guard us against ourselves? Where one man, in our times, makes shipwreck of honour and peace, from the sordid desire of accumulation, ten thousand sink into deeper disgrace from what are termed *Pecuniary Involvements;* though the true name is heart-breaking, soul-ensnaring, mean, yet corroding misery; the defence against which every man of sense and spirit holds in his own hand, if he had sufficient moral energy to use it. Extravagance is the prominent vice of our age; yet our prodigal system, instead of elevating and liberalizing, actually narrows the spirit; the broad scheme of modern expensiveness rendering all manner of pitiful pinching and screwing necessary in conducting the details. No man is at ease. We cannot afford to be social, because it costs so much to be fine; and how can they be either generous or charitable, who require much more than they possess to pay for their *necessary superfluities?* Without timely resistance of the insidious temptations which, at present, waylay every man of liberal feelings without fortune, what are patriotism, independence, and public virtue, but empty names—if not showy labels, telling the minister, or those who cater for him, that man's market price!——But we are wandering far from the treacherous designs of Greene's relatives."

"In which they shall not prosper, by God!" exclaimed Frankland, with even more than his wonted energy; and I have never seen a handsome and manly countenance more dignified by a generous and enthusiastic sentiment, than that which beamed upon me, as, pausing in the path, he uttered this solemn adjuration. "Every man must love something; and I like poor Jack, with the love of remembered boyhood, and of habit, if nothing better. But were it not so, it is a man's achievement to attempt to throw open the doors of those solitary English Bedlams; and destroy the law which, in this country, lodges the most monstrous power of despotic states in the hands of avaricious relatives.—No Bastiles in England!—there are half a score, at this moment, and of the worst description, in the county of Surrey alone. What matters it, whether the power of issuing the *Lettre de cachet* is lodged with a minister or a physician?"

Frankland threw himself into this case with his whole soul, periling upon it all that more prudent or more selfish men esteem—the slender remains of his fortune, and his gathering professional reputation. This farther hardship attended the case—that Greene's funds were either tied up, or turned by his friends into engines against him. Who would undertake the cause of a virtually pauper lunatic, already in confinement, under regular process of law, conducted by the ablest counsel and most respectable solicitors in London; and to which such a body of evidence, medical and common, gave credit and stability?

For months, it remained doubtful whether all the courage, energy, and ability of Frankland, might not be eventually baffled by the power of purse possessed by the opposite party, and his client be really driven mad, long before opportunity was obtained to prove his sanity. In these desperate circumstances, Frankland adopted bold measures. Throwing the conventionalities of his profession overboard, he brought that potent auxiliary, of which all the learned faculties are so peculiarly jealous—the Press—to bear upon the case.

Doctors were at last despatched, by order of the Court, to examine the state of the patient; and it is fortunate for mankind that doctors will sometimes differ.

The kind and degree of Greene's insanity afforded an excellent theme for learned talk and lengthened debate, which occupied many pages of the medical journals, until, by and by, it came to be questioned if his madness was really of the sort that disqualified a man for the management of his own affairs, or which made perpetual restraint necessary.

The opposite party, upon this, became alarmed, pleaded, warned and tried to upset the whole proceedings, by trying to set the weak-minded client against his generous advocate. Greene was not quite so insane as to fall into the snare, though laid by her who had been his favourite sister; and this abortive attempt was construed into a fresh proof of his alienation of mind — the horror and aversion he now showed to this lady being held as evidence against him; as if there had not been reason enough for this feeling, in her unsisterly and atrocious conduct.

There was a prospect, at last, that a question which the most celebrated physicians in London could not solve, would be decided by a common jury; and that tradesmen and shopkeepers might determine more righteously than the wise and the learned, what degree of mental aberration was to subject a fellow-citizen to a civil death, and to the lingering and horrible punishment of perpetual confinement.

I had assisted Frankland's, or rather Greene's solicitors, in finding evidence to rebut the volumes of ludicrous, distorted, and vamped-up testimony that was arrayed against him; and I had often visited him with the physicians sent down to examine and report upon his case, in which, had it only been from sympathy with Frankland's anxiety, I would have felt deep concern. But my intercourse with the poor defendant — who, to convince the doctors of his profound wisdom, at one time assumed so cunning a look, and such airs of solemnity, and, at another, gave way to his over-wrought feelings, in bursts of rage at his relatives, and despair for himself — redoubled my interest in the case. My amazement, at last, was, that his feeble and shaken mind resisted the tortures of suspense and apprehension, which dictated the perpetually recurring question — "Do you think it possible a jury will find me mad? — How shall I stand that dreadful trial? — May I, perhaps, be kept in this horrible place to the end of life? — and I shall not be twenty-eight till Ladyday? — Good God! — I shall go distracted!"

These apprehensions, to which was added his uncertainty about the fate of the Laura of his muse, whom he now, however, soberly named to me Patty or Peggy — were but sorry preparatives for that fiery ordeal through which the most sane man could not easily pass.

The preliminary conflict, and the remarkable nature of the case, had attracted a large share of the public attention before the trial came on. In its conduct, whatever is wholesome and generous in the profession of the hired advocate, and all that is sinister, equivocal, or directly evil, were strikingly conspicuous. Their fame, their fees, the professional spirit, and the consciousness of public attention, stimulated both the medical men and the lawyers to extraordinary exertion. But I rejoice to say the opponents sharpened their weapons and mustered their forces, only to swell the triumph of Frankland. A trial of four days, during which the faculties of all engaged were strained to the utmost, terminated in the establishment of Mr. Greene in the possession of his senses and the uncontrolled management of his fortune.

In how exalted a light did Frankland appear to me at the close of that memorable fourth, and most anxious day! I knew and had participated in all his fears and feelings; I had been the witness, and, in some respects, the sharer of his previous efforts under the awful responsibility he had assumed for his unhappy friend. Had the case terminated ill, I knew that to himself the consequences must have been overwhelming; and when — with the most consummate skill of the advocate, and the most persuasive powers of the accomplished orator, who yet finds his true inspiration in his own heart — he closed his address, by imploring the jury, in finding for his unfortunate client, to defend Englishmen, in all future time, from the power of a law more hostile to personal liberty, more fatally subversive of the natural affections, and of those tender domestic charities which alone make life desirable, than any ever before held over civilized man — how was I thrilled by the sense of the glorious gifts with which it had pleased God to endow this man, for the blessing and grace of his fellow-creatures! And was I to live to witness those noble energies worse than thrown away — to see those talents perverted, prostrated, and finally

converted into the instrument of torture and shame to the man they had so glorified!

Exhausted by his gigantic effort, and still more by mental anxiety — for Frankland was, at no time, of those cool counsel, who, having done all they can, lie down content, and take the event lightly — he retired early from the congratulations of the bar, and of the members of the medical faculty, the philosophers, and moralists, and mere lawyers, who filled the court; leaving each with the impression that it was in *his* own science, his own particular pursuit, that the accomplished barrister had displayed the greatest knowledge, and excelled the most. He had previously recommended Greene to my especial care for the day; and had not one or two sympathizing jurymen, melted by the eloquence of Frankland, wept with the poor fellow, for company, I am afraid we might have had a motion for a new trial, founded on such evidences of sensibility, in a man who had just escaped destruction worse than death. I prevailed with him to take at least one night's repose before he set off for Dorsetshire, in pursuit of Laura, — a chase which did not, in the least, lead me to doubt his soundness of mind, and which furnished me with another agreeable proof of his soundness of heart; as he informed me, the attachment arose long before he was a man of fortune.

Next morning, Frankland's servant — a negro lad, of most spaniel-like affection, submission, and fidelity to his master, but whom I disliked, nevertheless, as an expensive, and not absolutely necessary appendage — brought me intelligence that his master had been very ill all night, and that in a joint consultation held between himself, Timothy, and Sal the laundress, it was agreed that the apothecary should be called in, as the malady had resisted Tim's applications of linen cloths dipped in æther, and applied to the temples, which he had sometimes seen his master employ, and the woman's sole internal specific of burnt brandy. It was an equal chance that they had not killed him between them, which they assuredly would have done had they not fortunately differed about the mode of treatment: Sal being for a phlogistic, and Tim for an anti-phlogistic regimen. I found their patient under a violent fever, and already partially delirious, quite prostrate and unable to speak to me, although he still recognised me, and pressed my hand. On his table by the bed-side, where Sal had mustered the various insignia of her assumed office of sick nurse, lay an unclosed penciled note, addressed to myself, in a handwriting which showed how shattered the nerves of the writer were. It was in these words: —

"My dear Sir — I scrawl these lines before being put, in spite of myself, to bed. I fear I am about to be seriously indisposed: I have felt this for the last few days. Liability to violent fever, I have received, from my mother, along with much of good and something of evil — the inheritance of a susceptible organization and a hot Carolinian blood. — Is the jargon of physiology and the 'philosophy of mind,' of which we have been hearing so much in these last days, upsetting my brain already? — I have not a moment to lose. In a few hours I shall probably be delirious — in a few days I may die. Will you be my Executor? I am sure that I know *you*; and I think you understand one who, with all his faults, fully appreciates your manly and sincere character, though he may never have told you so. Will you, then, come to me, direct my doctor, and, if need be, see me buried? I know you will. But a more trying office remains. Will you open whatever letters may come addressed to me during my illness, whether from *man* or *woman*, and act for me as my knowledge of your honour and sensibility assures me you will act, if you consent at all? Do not refuse me. You perceive how helplessly and entirely I throw myself upon you.

"From boyhood, my pride — or call it by what hard name you will — has preserved me from even the shadow of a weak, or a misplaced confidence, or an unworthy love — yet, in my ravings, names may escape me, and old scenes be alluded to, which, I may frankly say, I would not voluntarily pour even into your friendly ear, were I master of my faculties. Let no one near me.

"If I die, I hope the sale of my books will bury me, and pay my debts — they are too numerous: but if I live, that fault shall be amended. Greene will make up any deficiency. Transmit the sealed packet you will find in my desk, when I am buried, — not sooner. God bless you — and farewell!"

I did not require this letter to animate the zeal of friendship; yet I could not read it without being strongly affected. I called in immediate advice and watched by my friend throughout the day. Two gentlemen, both eminent in their profession, and in great practice, who had come in contact with Frankland on the late trial, called in the

course of the second day, on accidentally hearing of his illness, and that he was alone in chambers, and distant from any relative. Their offers of professional service were so frankly and affectionately made; and fees, on the part of an unconscious and not a rich man, were so sincerely disclaimed, that, as Frankland's friend, I did both gentlemen the kindness—and it was kindness—to accept of their offers of attendance. Had their patient been a prince of the blood, this I will say for them, more attention could not have been paid to him; nor would half the real anxiety have been felt, which these gentlemen showed to save the valuable life of a man whose only claim was the promise of a noble career, and the possession of transcendent talents. It would have been a proud trophy of their science to restore to society such a character as Frankland must become.

Events fell out nearly as Frankland had foreseen. He was fearfully ill; and I did not choose to leave him in those critical days, when life hovered on the cast of every hour, to the sole care of either the nurse or the apothecary. I accordingly regularly changed guard with Black Timothy, in whose affection and care I could fully confide.

On the third night, the fever rose very high, and I had difficulty to keep the patient in bed. "Mother!" was the frequent exclamation of his delirium; and he would touchingly address his mother—who, I was aware, had been, for several years, dead—as if she were present with him. Another image haunted his excited brain, which revealed to me the nature of the obscure allusions of his note.

The midnight solitary watch kept over the dead body of one we have loved in life, has often been pathetically described. To my feelings such solemn vigil is less affecting than that held by anxious affection over the sick couch of one tossing in the violence of delirious fever—marking the wanderings of wild eyes, and listening to those incoherent ravings which indicate the strife and agony of passion, and the fierce travail of the mind, over which reason holds no control; watching, as it were, the visible conflict of blood and judgment, of the immaterial with the earthy; and, more than all, beholding the strength and integrity of the sentiments and affections triumphing amidst the wandering and obscuration of the senses. At another time I might have smiled—now I was more inclined to weep—at the bursts of laughter which the negro, in the midst of his dolour, when moved by the frantic illusions under which his master laboured, sent through that lonely chamber. Although Timothy appeared perfectly sensible in this failure in respect, and outrage of common humanity, the black dog could not control his irresistible feeling of the ludicrous, when Frankland, springing from the bed, his eyes flashing over me with the unnatural brightness of delirium, caught and strained me to his bosom—"Hugging ould Massa Richar," the sable villain said, shaking in convulsions of laughter, "for Missey Eleeny; though him hab such black brush beard."

"Helena! dearest Helena!" was the frantic and pathetic cry, which left me no inclination for mirth; "Will the wretches so dishonour you? Will they force you upon the public gaze?—violate all the virgin sanctities of your nature?—Do they persist in their damned, damned scheme?—No, no, no—I will perish sooner: no more prudence—no more waiting—I am sick of it—sick, sick, Helena! Lay your cool fingers on my temples, love—how they throb—there, there!"—His head faintly sunk on my arm; and, in a little while, we were able to replace him in bed. Through the rest of the night, among his other delirious wanderings, he frequently burst into eloquent addresses to juries, alternating with impassioned ravings about the fate from which he was to rescue this beloved Helena; and imprecations against some ruthless one, who assumed power over her destinies.

The mental health of Frankland was beyond my medicaments; but I flattered myself that my care and vigilance were helpful in his bodily restoration, after nature, seconded by the eminent skill of his zealous physicians, had subdued the disease. The delicate offers of service from many unexpected quarters, which were pressed upon me in his behalf, made me proud of my friend, and pleased with my species.

As the violence of his disorder abated, my duties became daily much lighter, though they promised to be tedious. Some of my functions were easy indeed. The men of business appeared to know, by instinct, that Frankland was incapable of professional exertion; for no briefs were even offered at this time, and very few letters came, and those not of the delicate kind to which my mission specially referred. I made it my daily business to be in the way at the delivery of the post from the West; for it was in that direction I knew that Frankland's early

connexions lay, though he had, I understood, no near surviving relatives.

He had been confined for three weeks before the expected despatches, so mysteriously announced in his note, arrived. The correspondence could not then have been either a very close or vehement one. I had no doubt about the sex of the writer of the missive I touched so gingerly, cautiously reconnoitring the outside. But had my instincts, informed by the negro's grin, been at fault, the tiny German characters of the name so often repeated by the unconscious Frankland, and impressed on the seal, was sure confirmation. Was my curiosity excited?—Yes, a little; but I had honourably resisted its cravings, as often as Timothy, in the simplicity of his heart, wept over "Massa dying," and pitied "poor leetel Missey Heleny," as if tempting me to question him. Even now, though I well remembered the injunctions of my friend, and, indeed, reperused his directions, I could not all at once violate that tiny seal, and possess myself of the confidence which I felt was never meant for me. In obedience to these delicate scruples, I carried the epistle in my waistcoat pocket for some hours; not looking, first at it, and then at poor Frankland, above once in the ten minutes. Days and weeks, I foresaw, might elapse before he was able to relieve me from these embarrassments, or with safety bear the agitation which might attend the opening of this little letter; and, as the hour of post drew near, my refinements and ruminations gave way to my prescribed duty and the dictates of common sense — I broke the seal.

The pathetic exclamations of Frankland had not prepared me for what, at first sight, seemed an exceedingly tame epistle; so dry and flat, that it might have been written by a man of business, doing the *needful*, and no more; and unable, in conscience, to spin out what would turn the leaf and so double the charge. The leaf, in fact, was merely turned; and there was no pithy postscript, no emphatic Italics, no exclamatory sentences — nothing, in short, to have offended *The Young Lady's Monitress* for 1735, or the starched genius of Miss Harriet Byron; yet the name Helena Vane appeared at full length, and in very fair characters, after a plain *yours sincerely.* I perfectly remember the tenor of this seeming-calm epistle, in which there was not a single interpolation or erasure, save in the address, which originally appeared to have been, dear James Charles—and now hovered between Dear Sir and Dear Mr. Frankland, to which was appended : —

"When I last saw you, which, I remember, was on the morning after the autumn assize ball, for a few minutes, in going to Harris' Library, you requested me to renew the promise you had exacted in the former year, that I should not enter upon the profession my noble patrons here believe would be so advantageous to my sisters and myself, or, at least, not consent to appear in public, until I had acquainted you. I consider it my duty to fulfil this promise, with which I could not comply in words at the time, as you may remember the party that came up to us. There are so many Vanes, and old friends and connexions of our family in Bath this season, who kindly interest themselves for my advantage, that Lady —— says she can no longer suffer childish scruples to stand in the way of my true interests and the prospects of my sisters. They also are impatient for my decision.—My decision!—Does the point then rest with me? This is, without doubt, a very awful affair to me, and one which I know must colour my whole future life. But, while so many better-informed and friendly persons urge the adoption of a profession, which, but for the one fatal and insurmountable objection of publicity, I should dearly love, I must endeavour to conquer personal repugnance; and, indeed, I see no course left but immediate and grateful acquiescence with the wishes of those who have already done so much for us all, and with whom I have dallied too long.

"Mamma and my sisters beg to congratulate you upon the triumph of our old playmate, poor Jack Greene — of which we read with great interest in the newspapers. Your admirers, who are numerous in this quarter, say that this must have a happy influence upon your professional prospects.

"If I come out, and if I am successful here — that first tremendous *if!* — my friends imagine that they may procure me an advantageous engagement in London next season. Perhaps we may then sometimes meet, and renew the memory of happy old times; if—again—*if* grave and learned lawyers may tolerate frivolous stage heroines. I have now tried to redeem my implied promise; and, if I do not hear from you before the 10th of next month, then, on that night, pray for the poor, lost Ophelia! — Yours sincerely, "Helena Vane."

This, then, was the clew to Frankland's broken exclamations in his delirium. He

could not, in ordinary prudence, afford to marry; he would not endure that the woman to whom he had in earlier years been passionately, as he was still deeply, attached, and who, he hoped, returned his affection, should go upon the stage, in opposition, as he believed, to her own inclination, but overpowered by the necessities of her family; and the solicitations and flatteries of those around her.

Helena Vane was the youngest of three sisters; the flower of one of those families of lovely, elegant, and well-born paupers, who cannot dig, and who to beg become, in time, *not ashamed*. Her father had been in the navy; and the widow, with her daughters, after romancing about in Scottish, Welsh, and Swiss Cottages, and graduating into toad-eaters, now lived in a small house in the neighbourhood of Gosport. The elder girls, by dint of personal accomplishments, a little dexterous flattery, and a wide, genteel, and well-cultivated acquaintance, visited a great deal about; and were even received in one or two noble families — partly from whim, partly from mistaken benevolence, and, in one instance, from the patrician patrons desiring to mortify other noble persons, who were the relatives, and who thus ought to have been the friends of the unprotected girls.

I can scarcely conceive any course of life less favourable to the formation of firm and virtuous character, and happy feminine dispositions, than that led by the elder Miss Vanes after leaving school. It alternated between the luxurious mansions of the great and their mother's poor home; between repining and luxury — ambitious projects and disappointed hopes. They were courtiers upon a small scale, but *unpensioned*. They were seldom together, as one was considered enough at a time in any family; and, in spite of the seeming graciousness and real bounty of patrons, they found themselves neither treated with the kindliness of relationship, nor the frank equality of independent friendship:—not considered quite as menials —but never as equals. In their own minds were combined the pride of birth with the meanness of dependence.

Marriage—upon which all women, unhappily for themselves, place but too much reliance, merely as a means of life — was next to impossible in their condition. Such girls are of the Flying-fish class of society. If they aspire, the watchful inhabitants of the upper air pounce upon and drive them back to the inferior element; while they are disclaimed and chased away by those below, as dangerous and rapacious encroachers, who only seek the deep to snatch a prey. The dowagers, accordingly, were on the alert, to preserve minor sons, and nephews at school, from the *arts* and fascinations of the Miss Vanes; while the substantial yeoman, the small squire, the curate, the rural surgeon, the surveyor of the estate, the engineer constructing the new bridge, nay, the very exciseman himself, — though all and each might occasionally find themselves in company with the beautiful Miss Vanes at election balls, and also at good men's feasts, and might wonder and admire, and fancy Caroline a more distinguished-looking woman than my Lady, and Harriet a lovelier creature than the young Countess herself,—yet curate, and squire, and yeoman, never went farther than wonder and admiration; too humble or too prudent to aspire to the high-bred, penniless, hanger-on beauties.

The younger sister, the beloved of my friend, had lived much more at home. She was not yet depreciated by notoriety, and her great musical talents, which were now to make the fortune of the family, already made her of more momentary consequence in high society than her sisters. Happier influences had been around her youth. She was the darling of a mother, affectionate, though frivolous; and her incipient attachment to a man of the character of Frankland, was a talisman to protect the young girl against the blandishments of unequal society, and the seductions of her own vanity. I do not mean to say that she had passed through the dangerous ordeal wholly unscathed. Gentle and yielding, beautiful in person, and ingratiating in manners — I would fain believe that, in her instance, a woman's stars may sometimes be more in fault than herself.—— But I have wandered from her epistle, which I studied until I fancied I comprehended the whole case. My friend was not in circumstances to warrant their immediate union; and his pride, or his propriety — or call it an overstrained sense of delicacy — could not submit to his future wife appearing on the public stage, even under the most flattering auspices, and with the probability of rapidly making a fortune. How was he, who could not bear, with ordinary patience, even clumsy flattery, and vulgar, mal-adroit praise of himself, to endure criticism upon the beauty, the accomplishments, the dress, and the character of Helena?—to see her become the hackneyed

theme of a nine days' wonder—dragged through all the Sunday journals—the *Scourge* pronouncing her of gawky height, and the *Snake* of dumpy stature; one saying her eyes were black, and the other blue, while a third made them out of a greenish-gray tint; one declaring her petticoats, or her tucker, a straw's breadth too scanty, and the other setting her down as a muffled prude, because these errors were amended.

I understood the character of Frankland too well to doubt for a moment the part which he would have taken if capable of acting for himself. He would, I knew, either at once have married, or for ever have resigned her to her profession and to the service of the family, whose chief dependence was now on her talents. In these circumstances, I *trimmed* as dexterously as I could; and, with as much delicacy as possible, acquainted the young lady with the nature of my trust, and with the serious illness of my friend; and earnestly suggested, that whatever affair of moment was at his decision, or depending on his advice, should be delayed for, at least, one month.

This delay was, I presume, conceded; but I cannot tell the interior workings of the family policy of the Vanes and their patronesses. There was, I fear, no solid basis of principle in any of the women, upon which to found any consistent scheme. It would, I afterwards understood, have been gratifying to the family to see Helena married to a man like Frankland, had he already been in tolerable practice; and the humiliation of her intended sacrifice was, at times, severely felt by them all, especially as it might afterwards affect the unmarried sisters. The most brilliant success, and fortune itself, could never obliterate the recollection that a sister of the daughters of Captain Vane, was, or had been, upon the stage; while, upon the other side, immediate exigency, the importunity of patrons and amateurs, and the bitterness of dependence, which they had drunk to the very dregs, urged Helena on to her fate. That propitious opening in Frankland's affairs, which the family council hoped from the fortunate issue of the case of Greene, was suddenly shut by his unfortunate and tedious illness; and, if Helena was ever to appear, there could be no season so auspicious as the present.

Frankland was, meanwhile, slowly recovering, and already took cognizance, though apparently little interest, in any thing passing around him, save the delivery of the West post. When that hour passed, and day after day produced only old newspapers, or indifferent letters, he generally sunk into apathetic silence for some hours, apparently at once relieved and disappointed.

I had not yet given him an account of my stewardship, reserving the disclosure until his health was more confirmed, and until he could safely hold a pen. But long before that period arrived, he had contrived, by the aid of Timothy, at many different sittings up in bed, to scrawl out—in those feeble characters which proved how much he had suffered, and how deeply he felt—a letter, intended to meet no eyes save those of the lady to whom I was requested to address it.

I was surprised, nay offended, that no reply came to so affecting a proof of undecaying tenderness; of an affection which had held power over his mind in its most alienated state, and which was the first to awaken in his bosom, as thought, and feeling, and the hope of life returned. Let me not blame Helena. Her sisters, divided in opinion between an immediate interest and an enduring family pride, were, at all events, agreed in the necessity of suppressing her letters, and of not distracting her attention, and withdrawing her mind from what they called her studies, at so critical a period:—For Frankland spoke only of distant hopes of professional success, and, in the meanwhile, of privation and struggle; and noble patrons were urgent, and excited amateurs impatient for a consummation, which, whether it might be life or death to the young *debutante*, according as she sustained or fell short of highly-raised public expectation, was, to them, but the trifling difference between flattering and caressing, or despising and neglecting her; and excellent amusement either way.

Continued debility and relaxed nerves made my friend probably more quiescent under the continued silence of Helena than he might have been at another season. They, besides, had rarely corresponded; and he rested, with tolerable security, upon her having adopted my suggestion of delay. In the progress of his slow recovery, conversation frequently turned upon the Vane family. I could learn, that he admired without liking the sisters—almost despised the fond mother—and felt warm affection for Helena—which yet admitted of some doubts and drawbacks. "She had been, in some points, spoiled by her family," he said. This was a great length for a lover to go; but neither strong

attachment, nor a high sense of honour, which held him to engagements, which, if not expressed, had been well understood, permitted him to recede. She had given the concerted signal, which he had entreated, and it remained for him immediately to reply to it.

My secret prepossession was for a compromise, a *juste-milieu* measure. "Could not this angelic songstress remain for a year or two longer in single blessedness and safe retirement, awaiting the issue of those brilliant professional prospects which, in the case of her lover, are almost certain to be realized —unless, indeed"—I added, hesitatingly.

"Unless what, my friend," was the animated rejoinder of Frankland, catching eagerly at whatever favoured the scheme which his judgment refused to sanction.

"Unless this beautiful Helena, superadded to all her virtues and charms, possess a force of character, and habits of activity and self-dependence, which, I regret to say, modern female education does not tend to form.—If we train women only for the enervating refinements of luxurious life, how shall we blame their lack of the useful virtues? The portionless wife of a struggling professional man, would require, in this age, to be something more than a mere angel. It is more the prevailing character of the women, I assure you, and the expensive habits of modern society, that inspire my proverbial horror of improvident marriages, than the mere objection of a narrow income."

Frankland was silent; and I felt that I had said enough, and took my leave, arranging a longer airing for the morrow than he had yet ventured upon. But, for this purpose, no morrow came. On that day, Frankland learned from Greene, who had arrived from Bath, the distracting intelligence that Helena was to appear on the same night. The news was confirmed, by the usual preliminary flourish of trumpets, in the Bath and Bristol papers. When I reached his chambers, I found only Greene busied in directing Timothy.

"Gone to Bath!" was my horror-struck exclamation, in answer to Greene's information.

"And will certainly reach soon after the drawing up of the curtain. How I envy Frankland his feelings!—to witness the lady of his secret love *debut* under such brilliant circumstances! You have never, I believe, seen the beauteous Helena Vane. O rose of May! dear maid! kind sister! sweet Ophelia!—Never had Hamlet's love so exquisite a representative. What melting pathos, what sensibility in her looks and tones, in those seeming simple words—

He is dead and gone, ladye,
He is dead and gone."

The provoking fellow would have inflicted more of these lines upon me, had I not yelled again, "Gone to Bath! What did he say? How did he look? Left he no message? How could you, Mr. Greene, permit such madness? He is probably again delirious:—he will expire on the road."

"What do you mean? I never saw Frankland look better—his colour fine—his eyes flashing with life and soul; he even said something witty about *not* being like Byron, *not* having time to wait for a blue coat to be married in. He also said he would write you, and that you must send Timothy, and his medicine, and dressing things by the first coach—and fifty pounds, for which I have just run to my banker's.—Half my fortune is at the disposal of the generous friend to whom I owe the whole of it—and my happiness too. But there is a certain Laura ——. Well, no more of that. If I were not positively engaged to return to Dorsetshire to-day, I would have run down with Frankland to witness the most interesting *debut* that has probably ever taken place on the English stage.—How I would have enjoyed the reflected sunshine of his rapturous feelings, when he perceives that 'Sweet Ophelia' recognises him in the stage-box:—for, even if he should get horses readily, he cannot reach before the third act."

I digested my impatience in the best way I could. "Had Fair Rosamond," he provokingly continued, "been sustained by the genius and sensibility of Helena Vane, the town might have witnessed a very different result, Mr. Richard. But no matter; there are such things as—*revivals*."

Notwithstanding his allegiance to his lady, Laura, I believed Frankland had shaken off Greene in the morning; for, when I announced my purpose of taking the place of Timothy, and setting off after my friend, he proposed to accompany me. This I at once negatived, aware that Frankland might be offended by me pursuing him myself, and utterly indignant at the implied interference of Greene.

How differently individuals, who may be supposed to feel alike, sometimes view the same event! There was Greene in ecstasy

with the opening of an adventure which distressed me beyond measure. An indifferent spectator might have smiled at Sir Gravity, seated upon a trunk, watching Timothy showing the double row of his white teeth, as, on his knees, he tugged, and pushed, and stuffed a carpet-bag, with the unromantic appliances of boots and pocket-handkerchiefs, for his fugitive master, who, I feared, was rushing on ruin; and the excited Poet, vowing, in the fulness of his rapturous gratitude, that Frankland, and Frankland alone, was worthy of the rich homage of youth, beauty, genius, fame—in short, of that piece of most admired perfection, the new Ophelia.

My chagrin and perplexity were, I dare say, visible in my face, as I burst, from a fit of musing, into the abrupt question—"What sort of girl is she?"

"Girl!—Well, it is become a sweet word, especially in Moore's and Byron's verse. But for the beauteous Helena!—

Oh! she is more than painting can express,
Or youthful poets fancy when they dream."

"Soh!—But has she any fortune?—has she any sense? Frankland's wife would need both."

My question showed not much of the latter quality, considering the man to whom it was addressed. I could obtain nothing from him, save that the astonishing tragic powers of Helena, who was first intended to appear merely as a singer, had been unexpectedly "developed," in his own lyric of the "Mad Maiden's Madrigal." So had said, and so had written, Miss Caroline Vane to the man whose capacity to manage £1500 a-year had been as "unexpectedly developed," by the verdict of a jury. I trembled for *Laura*, afar off in Dorsetshire.

The fates had decreed that I should make no journey to Bath at this time; and I felt respited, unpleasant as were the circumstances which freed me. Mrs. Hannah More has said—and had any woman, less hallowed, ventured the same freedom, it would certainly have been called profane—"That the only real evils of this lower world are sin and bile." Mrs. Hannah, I apprehend, was too fortunate and prudent a person to have tasted of a third evil, which is sometimes termed the root of all evil. It is a root of which few, whether rich or poor, escape, at one time or other, tasting the bitterness. Frankland, imagined to be flying on the wings of love, was secretly chewing it on the Bath road; and its sedative effects had so far allayed the impetuous current of passion and locomotion, that he took time, while the horses were changing, to write a hasty letter, acquainting me with his sudden but necessary resolution, and his lack of the ways and means.

I did my duty to my friend, and abided the event with as much patience as I could summon up. From the newspapers I received the first certain intelligence. The Bath and the London journals, with the many lesser lights revolving in the small country towns, were full of the affair; and every drawing-room, green-room, pump-room, parlour, back-shop, and coffee-house, rung, for some days, with "the gallantry of the celebrated liberal barrister, Mr. F——, who had snatched the lovely Miss V——, whose *debut* had created such a sensation in Bath, from the boards, on her first night; and run away with her to that happy land of love and romance, where Cupid, rose-lipped, impatient imp, is not bound to wait the good pleasure of drowsy parsons, and their lazy clerks, nor yet for marriage-licenses, whether special or common."

But my chief medium of intelligence was Greene, who received letter upon letter from the sister of the heroine. He, whose element was excitement, was now more moved by the eclat of the hasty marriage, and the gallant and romantic circumstances attending it, than if Helena had introduced the "Mad Maiden's Madrigal," in the third act, and come forth, from the ordeal of a first night, the most triumphant of all Ophelias. His only business, for three days, was to run from coffee-house to coffee-house, and from club to club, wherever he could find admittance, to expatiate upon the gallantry of his distinguished friend—dauntless in love as in law—on the rare beauty of "the Arabian bird" Frankland had caught in her first flight,—and to favour me with long extracts from Miss Vane's letters.

For the third time, he caught me by the button, in the full, rolling human tide of the Strand. "Was it not a dashing affair?—Who would have expected such a fiery outbreak from Frankland?—but the Carolinian blood was a-blaze. He drove the last two stages himself—feeble as he was—would trust no post-boy.—Drove up to the theatre, four-in-hand, slap-bang—a prodigious crowd assembled—rushed upon the stage, and caught Helena—divine Ophelia!—in his arms, as she was about to sink under her own overpowering emotions—poor girl!—and Kean's devilish

Ha! ha! are you *honest*?

Just in the nick of time you see,—and down

sunk the lovers in each other's arms, Frankland as dead as Harry the Eighth—and down tumbled the curtain. The house was in rare confusion and amaze—as you may suppose—the manager in agony—and Hamlet, stamping for his Ophelia ravished from him. But he is a good-hearted fellow at bottom, Kean; with a pretty spice of enthusiasm and romance in his composition, too. He went before the curtain, and, in a neat speech, informed the ladies and gentlemen, that their tragedy, of that night, was likely to end, after the approved manner of all comedies,—with the near prospect of a wedding. And down came pit, gallery, and boxes, in three distinct rounds, to the happy pair. Many of the young ladies were driven to their cambric, I am told, by the pathos of the scene. I dare say we may expect the young couple in town very soon. They are quite a passion in Bath—Caroline writes me—so fêted and petted."

I could only interject an occasional *humph* as my contribution to this information, the one-half of which was absurd exaggeration.

"But that is not the best of it.—Bath is divided into two furious factions;—one hostile, headed by Helena's former patroness, the Marchioness of Longlappette, the old doctors, and the manager, who complains of great pecuniary loss and very bad usage; and the other, by all the young ladies, the gay young men, and the young doctors, who uphold the lovers. Lady Longlappette, it is thought—*entre nous*—dexterously seized the opportunity of getting rid of the whole family—moved, as she says, by the deceit and ingratitude of the younger girl, and her insolent usage of Mr. Manager and the most fashionable audience that had been seen in Bath theatre for years. Miss Caroline Vane, who, in epistolary eloquence, rivals Madame de Sevigné herself, has filled sheet upon sheet to the Marchioness, breathing unappeasable sorrow, and Harriet even knelt before her; but the old lady continues inflexible, whipping her jaded hacks round Bath, bewailing her own candid, unsuspicious nature, which lays her so open to the arts of the designing, and vowing her nerves can't stand the shock of ever seeing a Vane in her house again.—Martyn, whom you have seen, writes me this."

"And what is to become of the young ladies?"

"For the present, I believe, they will come to town, and reside with their lovely sister, Mrs. Frankland."

"Humph! So Frankland has married three wives."

"My good sir, your conclusions are rather rapid.—It fortunately so happened, that, at the time of Helena's *debut*, Lord Tilsit, the head of the Vanes and a near relation of the young ladies, happened to be in Bath, by recommendation of his physicians.—Indeed, this influenced the period chosen for Helena's appearance."

"Tilsit the Cabinet Minister?"

"The same. Conceive how fortunate a stroke for our friend, this connexion."

"Humph!"

"Well, sir, Lord Tilsit had, it was believed, resented the name of Vane appearing in a playbill; and was so much pleased with the spirit displayed by Frankland, whom he knows by character, no doubt, that he made his physician, the celebrated Dr. Coddler, the bearer of the olive branch to the Misses Vanes. They had been driven to find an asylum in their milliner's for the time, by their furious patroness, who literally turned them out of doors. As soon as the license, about which his Lordship wrote to his friend the Archbishop with his own hand, was obtained, the marriage took place in his ready-furnished house; and he himself gave away the bride, who, with her sisters, had been living with him for some days previous to the marriage. Every soul in Bath, save the Longlappette faction, was so charmed, as his Lordship had, for five years, taken no notice of his fair relatives. Mrs. Frankland, in particular, had grown up an angelic creature since he had seen the Vanes.—What do you guess was his wedding gift?"

"Something very pretty from the Bath trinket-shops; or, perhaps—for Lord Tilsit knows the world—a small draft upon Hoare——"

"Better, sir—a gift of the most considerate and yet splendid kind—his late residence in Berkeley Square, with all the furniture as it stands, down to the very scrubbing-brushes, and including the silver dishes."

"Humph! and how are they to be filled?—though I believe genteel economy can make much out of silver dishes."

"O cynic! that is ever the way with you."

"You don't mean to tell me that Frankland will occupy that great, cast-off house—so far away from the regions of business—so large and expensive, that it would eat him up in taxes—unless, indeed, Lord Tilsit has given his beautiful relative an income, and one of his cast-off carriages too."

I was sensible of my own silly bitterness, without having power to restrain it. In what was this beginning to end?

"A new carriage, if she will do me the honour to accept of it, shall be my humble gift to Mrs. Frankland. And, as to income, it is universally allowed to be disgraceful, that young ladies, the daughters of a gallant officer, and the near relatives of a man who has done so much for his country as Lord Tilsit, should remain in a dependent situation. The Royal bounty could not flow in purer channels."

"Humph! — the spinsters are to be pensioned, then?"

"You are sometimes pleased to indulge in a caustic style of remark, Mr. Richard; but, as I know Frankland has no truer friend, and not one he esteems more, I may just hint to you in confidence——"

"Tell me nothing, sir——." I left him abruptly, mortified and sad, and heard no more of Frankland for about ten days. Then my friend Timothy, in a smart new livery, came with a rather long letter from his master, dated from the new residence — to which, however, Frankland made no allusion whatever—apologizing for silence. He requested as a particular favour, that I would breakfast with him on next Sunday morning: he longed so much to see me, and had so much to say. "Helena also," he added, "impatiently desires the pleasure of making the acquaintance of my guide, philosopher, and friend, — her unknown correspondent, and my nurse." Of the sisters he said nothing.

There was in my bosom a well-spring of affection for this man, which partook of the force and warmth of kindred blood. My late cares and anxieties for him, and even my present forebodings, endeared Frankland the more; and I chided down my suspicions, though my fears I could not conquer, as I viewed the precipice upon which he was venturing.

While I mused over his letter, which, though as friendly as possible, was, I imagined, not without a certain air of restraint, Timothy, translated, by his dress and the favour of his mistress, into a complete negro coxcomb, was entertaining Nurse Wilks and her helper in the kitchen with the glory and grandeur of Massa Frankland's new dwelling, his lady, the bride-cake, the coach, and the company. The topic was so acceptable to his audience and himself, that I was permitted as long time as I chose to answer his master's note; which I did by accepting his invitation.

Nurse Wilks, when Sunday arrived, hinted at the propriety of making my first visit in "my own hackney coach;" and, as I was going out in only my second-best surtout, fairly caught me, remonstrated, and swore, in the face of the heavens, which

Grew black as she was speaking,

that there would not be a drop of rain that day; and, moreover, was not I the well-known *Gentleman with the Umbrella*.

I set my face towards "the splendid mansion in Berkeley Square," at a heavier pace than the elastic step which had so oft borne me on to Frankland's chambers. The time of receiving me, though so prudently ordered, proved, I fear, somewhat *mal à propos*. I was admitted by a strange domestic; though Timothy, grinning welcome from ear to ear, usurped the office of groom of the chambers, in right of our intimacy; and had his claim allowed by the other man, perhaps, in respect of my thrifty, rain-defying surtout.

Tim's hilarity, gay attire, and fresh Sunday-morning bouquet, were not in harmony with the appearance of his master. I found Frankland alone in a small side apartment, and engaged in writing. If not quite so pale, he was even more thin than when I had last seen him; and, in the course of our three hours' interview, I remarked, with pain, that, if not so abstracted and thoughtful as I had often seen him, he was frequently absent and labouring in mind — disturbed and anxious. Our meeting was more than friendly. He received my hurried congratulations with a flush of those silent smiles which enkindled his face to its finest expression; and our all-hail, if not attended by violent demonstrations on either side, was of a character that showed me I had not yet lost my friend, and that he had not yet lost himself. Neither of us alluded to the past; and although I have no reason to imagine that Frankland was either ashamed of his marriage, or of its mode, I never found him voluntarily recurring to those romantic adventures at Bath, which had so enchanted Greene and others, among his green friends.

Timothy announced breakfast in the library; and a shade of embarrassment clouded Frankland's features. "My plans have not turned out well," he said, forcing a smile. "The fact is, I fancied Sunday morning the best of quiet, sober seasons, to make Helena acquainted with you; and most unexpectedly *her* relation, Lord Tilsit,

arrived in town last night, and craved her hospitality for a few days, as he is an invalid, and fears the chambers of his new house are still damp. I fancied you might find it pleasanter to see us alone at first, than in *their* circle, and ordered breakfast below: — but at your pleasure. Shall we join my wife's family and his Lordship up stairs, or remain where we are? I find Lord Tilsit a pleasant enough acquaintance."

Inclination, as well as delicacy, determined my choice. I knew that Frankland's pride, if no worthier motive, would have made him disdain the meanness of seeming or being ashamed to produce an old friend, had a prince been his guest instead of a diplomatic peer; but I also knew the lady-world too well not to be aware that my appearance might have embarrassed the Miss Vanes, as much as that of worthy Mr. C***** the poet did that humble and unworldly Christian woman, Hannah More, when discovered by her quality morning-visiters tête-à-tête with her, and wished fairly up the chimney.

We were ushered into the library, a handsome, almost a magnificent room, from which his Lordship's books were not yet removed, and where a splendid *dejeuner* was laid out, though no lady appeared. Frankland himself went in search of his dilatory wife; betraying to me, who so well could read every varying shade of that candid and expressive countenance, some signs of impatience, verging to displeasure. While he disappeared by the principal entrance, she glided in by the door opening on the small side apartment; a lovely and gracious-looking creature, still in the first bloom of youthful feelings, her spirit fresh in the dew of her youth.

A voice of witching sweetness, calling his name, arrested Frankland's steps; but ere he returned, she had already almost walked into my arms, introducing herself by saying, "I am certain I have at last the pleasure of seeing Mr. Frankland's particular friend — Mr. Richard Taylor? I cannot expect to attain the high place my husband holds in his heart; but I shall hope, in time, to glide into some small corner near Frankland." And now Frankland's face first brightened and beamed with something like bridal gladness.

With whatever he might be dissatisfied, he was evidently proud as well as fond of his wife. Throwing his arm round her waist, he drew her caressingly towards me, and, smiling upon her, he said, "I must bespeak your special kindness for this lady. I trust you are not in danger of finding her what I know you sometimes dread in modern young wives — too much angel—'tis her only fault." The lady, elated by the pride and felicity of her position, made some gay remark, which was mid-way encountered by my gallant, if somewhat ancient, compliments; and we sat down to breakfast, in good spirits, and pleased with each other.

I found Mrs. Frankland, on further observation, a more beautiful woman than even Greene's raptures had led me to expect, though far from my *beau-ideal* of her that might have been the chosen wife of Frankland. And, indeed, I was afterwards told by her sisters, that Helena had become twice as handsome after her marriage. Still her extreme loveliness was rather of that kind for which we look in the ideal of an Helen, a Gabrielle, or a Fair Rosamond — in a woman whose business it is unconsciously to dazzle and charm — than what a prudent man admires in the wife of a younger friend, for whose prosperity and happiness he is anxious.

Helena's was neither the beauty of a high intelligence, nor yet that of a lively sensibility. With strong and profound feeling it could hold no communion; and, great tragic actress as she had been pronounced, she never could have been *my* Ophelia. Little informing mind mingled with

The music breathing from her face.

I am told, by the way, the great critics call this line nonsense; but let that pass. But that face, harmonious in features, brilliant in tincture, and brightened by those infantile evanescent smiles which relieved its sweet passivity, was less alloyed by the animalism of mere beauty than is usual with the halcyon countenance. I may give a better idea of my friend's wife by saying, that, in the circle of Charles II., she might have rivalled Castlemain, though most unlike to her, and have eclipsed the fair Stuart.

I shall have blame to impute to this lady, which I must, in candour, even at this preliminary stage, divide with the world in which she moved and had her whole being. Gentle and flexible in her temper, indolent and luxurious in her habits, weak-principled, rather from ignorance, than from vice of disposition, and more capable of being false than of seeming harsh and unkind — enlightened charity ought almost to grant so uninstructed, and fair, and frail a creature, a dispensation from moral responsibility; and, in her case, and that of her class, to have admitted

the new and dangerous doctrine, that character is formed *for* and not *by* the individual.

My first impression had been favourable, though the woman, as I have said, was so different from my ideal of a wife for Frankland. My philosophy, or my cynicism, was melting away under the winning grace of her simple manners, and the sweetness of her voice; but the interview had not closed before it became too evident that this insidious charmer, with all her beauty and amiability, was not the helpmate for a man like my friend. Neither his mind, his temper, nor his fortune, could afford a mere toy, however elegant; and, as I perceived that he was already suspicious of the opinion I formed of his wife, I trembled for their happiness. Joyous, unreflecting, and inconsequent—fully conscious of her attractions of person, and of the possession of one brilliant talent, which she had learned far to over-rate as an element of enduring fireside happiness—she was yet docile and affectionate, and proud of her husband; and she might easily have been moulded to his will, if not to his mind, had not the world stepped in and conspired against both, with a force too potent for her feeble reason and compliant temper. Yes! her stars were more in fault than Helena. She was created for moderate affection and placid enjoyment; and had been trained for a world where roses bloom all the year round, where sound is music, and common breath odorous. She was like thousands upon thousands of the refined women of Europe, whom we inconsiderately blame as frivolous and perverted, while nearly all their faults are chargeable upon their education, and the sophisticated state of the society in which they move. In some golden isle of the Indian seas, Helena, for example, like thousands of her sisters, might have led a life that was one long, vague dream of luxurious sensation; basking in the sunshine, or floating on the tide; indolently gathering her meal from the bread-fruit tree, warbling her native music like a bird, and encountering no heavier toil than wreathing her hair with flowers. Equally happy might her life have been passed, reposing her jewelled limbs in voluptuous languor upon the cushions of the harem, breathing incense, and drowsily listening to oriental fictions. She might even have been happy in England or France, as a *modiste*, spending her life in contrasting gay colours, and inventing elegant forms; or in the humble condition of one of those "pretty maidens" one encounters in gardens, attending rosy cherubs, in muslin trousers and straw bonnets. None of these may appear very dignified modes of existence; but in showing how easily the real woman could have been made happy, I wish to prove society and the stars more in fault than the sex, when vanity leads to extravagance, and this besetting vice of the modern world, in its turn, to meanness in conduct, and depravity in principle. Moderate success in the profession to which she had been destined, might also have made Helena perfectly happy; for I confess that, in a creature familiar with exhibition from infancy, I never could perceive any marked sign of those "virgin sanctities of her nature," of which her lover, in his delirium, had deprecated the violation.

Even in a merely mercenary union, as the partner of a wealthy, good-humoured, and ostentatious man, Helena might have been both happy and respectable. Her stars were again in fault. Her lot had been taken above her caste; and, if the marriage of unequal ranks be perilous to happiness, how much worse is that of unequal minds! Helena had taken her place, side by side, with a remarkable man, in a life of lofty endeavour; which, if it promised high, and the highest of all reward, was yet, for a long time, to be one of sacrifice, privation, and self-command; though wisdom might, in every hour, have sweetened its austerities by enjoyments, which Helena, though capable of relishing, had, unfortunately for herself, not been taught to prize. I would be charitable with Helena. For an exposed position in the midst of a world of conflict, and suffering, and sorrow, she was not more unprepared than is frequent in her class; but yet how miserably deficient!

It may be imagined that I magnify the importance of the character of the wife on the prospects and conduct, and ultimate fate of her husband and her family: but this I deny as impossibility, if that husband be in a condition resembling that of my friend.

I do not know whether it might be heedlessness or forethought, that, as we lingered at the breakfast-table, made Helena laughingly remark, "Mr. Frankland once told me that *you* might not think our marriage such a mad freak as the world gave us credit for—until Lord Tilsit was so kind to us. Mamma is so glad that any *prudent* friend approves; especially you who, they say, go about in gay society like a Death's head and cross-bones. Frankland said you gave him good encouragement to marry."

"Provided he found the kind of wife I pictured, who would accept of him."

"And that was exactly you, Helena," said Frankland, smiling upon her, his voice involuntarily sinking to those tones which bespoke the tenderness of a fond if troubled affection. "She was, I remember, to be my intelligent friend, my endearing and cheerful companion; sympathizing in my sorrows and trials, and enjoying my triumphs——"

"I can, at least, answer for that, dear James!" she cried, looking, at the moment, quite beautiful; "whether they be in professional life, or in society. I was so proud of him the other night, Mr. Richard, at Lady Amen's party, when Mr. Rigby praised him so highly to my sister Caroline, though, I believe, they differ in politics."

With a vengeance they differed in politics, and in many other interests; though Rigby was, I knew, the oracle of the world in which Helena had moved, and one known to all other spheres as the dispenser of literary fame.

"So you met the great Rigby," was my rejoinder? "How did you find the man you used to despise?"

Frankland was rather disconcerted by my abruptness. "Quite as witty as I expected," he replied; "perhaps more so,—and much more pleasant. I recalled a lesson of charity you once gave me, in observing, that, if you had been the contemporary of Swift, you would have detested him; but, that now, seeing so much of his inner life and feelings, you were inclined to think of his character with great indulgence—to pity, and almost to like him."

"Oh, ho, sir! and you mean to commend my own lesson back to me!—but I won't have your warm detestation of the satirical, vicious Tory melt away with Lady Amen's ices in this way."

Frankland could still smile:—his conscience was clear.

"And what more was the paragon wife to perform?" said Mrs. Frankland.

"Darn her husband's hose, madam, when needful," was my rude reply; and she smiled, as at a very bad joke; "and make long extracts from musty law-books, or any similar duty, if so far honoured by his confidence." Helena gave my imagined bad joke the compliment of another civil smile; but, for the first time, looked as ladies do, when they are perplexed, to unriddle "a strange odd creature."

"To make home happy, comprehends most of the duties of a wife; yet that, I fear, is an art not so easily attainable as young ladies sometimes imagine."

Helena looked to her husband with the half-disdainful, radiant smiles of the conscious charmer; as if she pitied my old bachelor ignorance of the bliss which beauty, tenderness, and accomplishment like hers, had the power to impart, too much to be piqued by the freedom of my remark. Frankland answered her appealing yet triumphant glance by smiles as assured if more grave; and his wife fancied it necessary—in vindication, I presume, of her matronly prudence—to confess, with a look of candid humility, "I dare say I shall not, at first, be the very best of possible housekeepers; but I have often been out with married ladies, and seen them order things for the family from their tradespeople. My own maid is very clever, with a proper notion of every thing, as she has lived with several ladies of good fashion, and was particularly recommended to mamma."

I did not allow myself to smile, as she continued—"Lord Tilsit's tradespeople have been pestering us, ever since we came to town, with notes and cards, soliciting Mrs. Frankland's patronage and orders." Frankland looked uneasy again, as, with the *Goldsmithian tact*, upon which my friends have sometimes complimented me, I blurted out,—"London tradesmen, like the tragic lover, seem in love with ruin in these days:—

Another's first, and then their own,"

I continued, endeavouring to turn the awkward speech gently off—"Decay of business and competition among the shopkeepers, have worked an entire revolution in retail trade within these twenty years, especially at the West End."

"And you don't approve of changes?" said Frankland, smiling again: "you are Conservative?"

"I plead guilty to being old enough to grumble at many modern novelties—the system of long book-debts, and, consequently, improvident and rash orders and extravagant charges, among the rest."

"I believe there may be defects in the present financial system, domestic and public; but, I presume, it will right itself. *We* philosophers can only regret, that expensive luxury is the tax ever necessarily entailed upon refinement of taste and manners." He smiled in mockery of his own commonplace.

"I deny the necessity," I rejoined, briskly.

"So do I; but we must all submit, more or less, to something as imperative in its exactions," returned Frankland.

"While in May Fair, bow to May Fair's law?"

said I.

"Why, I fear it is so. Our prudence may be shown in the degree of compliance, and our fortitude in the strength of resistance; but to the goddess, Fashion, all must yield, as you may perceive:" and he bowed.

The latter part of this speech was directed to the Miss Vanes, who entered the room, splendidly equipped, to attend the Sunday Opera of St. —— Church, after having agreeably spent an hour or two in the Morning Sacrifice of arranging their hair and costume, so as, with the most dazzling effect, to confess themselves "Miserable sinners!" in the eyes of a polite congregation of other miserable sinners! Both were very handsome and elegant women, with more of the decided—the *pronounced*—air of high fashion, and much more of what ladies call *manner*, than their younger sister. She flew to them, in affectionate admiration of their looks and air, but especially of their clothes; and, after the sisterly kiss, busied herself, first in adjusting something about Caroline's bonnet, and then Harriet's sandal.

I cannot tell whether Frankland was merely absent, or did not intend me the honour of an introduction to his new relatives; but Helena had certainly forgotten me, until her self-possessed elder sister, in an audible whisper, begged to be introduced to Mr. Frankland's "admirable friend." My reception was most flattering and gracious, and not very much overdone; for the Vanes were really well-bred women, and, therefore, not apt to err on the side of excessive condescension to inferiors.

I afterwards found that the Miss Vanes were of the class of universal charmers. They had been trained to the business of pleasing; and, in absence of the lord or lady, appeared as desirous of captivating, in their several turns, the child, the chaplain, the butler, the gardener, the groom, or the old house-dog himself; and they generally succeeded, save with the child and the house-dog, with whom words and mock caresses were not current coin.

The young ladies were now gaily rallying Frankland on his irregular attendance at church. They were, themselves, so far exemplary, that, if no friend took them to the Opera on Saturday night, and thus, by late hours, put them out of good looks, they never neglected the fashionable service on Sunday. Religion is, at present, made so very easy and accommodating to gentlefolks, not to say amusing and attractive to the fashionable world, that it is unpardonable if any large portion of it remain longer either sceptical or unregenerate. I understand there is decided improvement. Miss Harriet Vane has lately exhibited, on Sundays, and even on week days, when in "serious society," symptoms of a *decided call*. Her emotion, her exultation, her delight, may, therefore, be imagined, when, as we still chatted, Lord Tilsit's servant brought his Lordship's compliments to Mrs. Frankland. "He meant to accompany her to church." Of the three sisters, each was excited in her own way.

Helena flushed *terrestrial* rosy-red, with gratified pride, and looked to Frankland:—"And *you* will go, James?" was uttered in her most persuasive tones, as her arm slid within his. Her elder sister was ever alert to cover her blunders:—"And, if I have leave, I will remain to entertain Mr. Richard Taylor until your return; especially as I shall have all those potent Russia and Morocco auxiliaries." She pointed to the book-cases.

"Now, pray do, Frankland," cried the still clinging charmer; "go with us to church."

"Let me not stand in the way of any devout purpose," I exclaimed: "I am going to church myself." This was an evident relief to the ladies, though another bar came in the way of their pious intentions, as Harriet suddenly recollected that some "horrid creature" or other had not sent home Mrs. Frankland's bonnet; and the *esprit* plumes of that which she had, had suffered in the dews and rains of the honeymoon. This was whispered among them. There was, moreover, neither carriage-room nor pew-room for more than four persons; and Miss Vane showed her sisterly affection and her prudence, by forcing her bonnet, with her seat, upon her married sister. "His Lordship would be so disappointed if she and Mr. Frankland did not accompany him to hear the Dean preach." Helena withdrew to attire herself, and soon returned.

"Let me see you soon," said Frankland, shaking hands—"very soon. This is but an abrupt meeting."

"Oh, do come to see us again, soon!" cried Helena; "and I shall sing for you as long as ever you please.—But his Lordship has got into the carriage."

We were now all in the entrance hall, and

Miss Harriet, who had taken her place, jumped out again, and running to her sister Caroline, whispered, "His Lordship means to request the freedom of asking his friend, the Dean, to eat a morsel of dinner with us in the evening, as he leaves town early to-morrow, and they have business, I suppose. Attend *you* to that, Caroline, he begs, and don't tease Frankland and Helena. His gentleman will do all that is requisite, and obtain from the —— Club House whatever you choose to order. The Dean is, his Lordship says, as to *gourmandise*, moderate, but rather fastidious."

"I have a high opinion of your discretion, Caroline," cried his Lordship from the carriage, "and of your *savoir vivre*."

"I shall be proud to merit your Lordship's good opinion." Slap-bang, up went the steps, and the carriage rolled off, leaving me half ensconced behind a pillar of the hall, wondering where my hat was to be looked for; and Miss Caroline already brooding hospitalities towards a Dean whose voice was potential alike in Church, State, Court, and University.

The church bells were now all ringing, carriages were rolling along; and, in this quarter, even a few pedestrians, chiefly smart female servants, might be seen. I had probably been observed coming out of the house; for, within a few yards of it, I was arrested by a young girl whom I had long known as the daughter of a respectable tradesman in our lane; and who, I understood, had lately obtained the rank of apprentice in the establishment of a fashionable French milliner. Though the traces of late hours were already visible in Mary Coxe's pale sharp features, she had still the tiptoe springy step and alert look of her class. She attempted to conceal her bandbox under her shawl, as an offence to the church-goers, while evidently glad to meet one who, she hoped, would assist her vain search for Mrs. Frankland.

"Madame Royet," she told me, "was so afraid to disappoint that lady, as it was a *new* family, and three or four ladies; but she was always so busy before Sundays, now that the town was filling so fast." There were five-and-twenty young ladies in the establishment, journey-women and apprentices, and they had been up every night for three weeks, till four in the morning, and all night on Saturdays: dresses were so required for Church and the Park."

"Then you will go home and have a good long sleep now, Mary, which you seem to want," said I, pointing out Frankland's house in the distance.

"No, indeed." And it came out in explanation, that, after the repeated vigils of these tea-stimulated handmaids of fashion and fashionable piety, an hour or two must be stolen from the Sunday to repair their own wardrobe, and improve it with such fragmentary finery as might enable them also to visit the scene of exhibition — to regale their eyes with the sight of their past labours, and, if girls of taste, genius, and invention, to obtain ideas for novel performances.

Poor things! a dray-horse, or a coal-heaver required less strength of constitution than the damsels on Madame Royet's staff, at this busy season. The little girl of whom I speak, soon became sickly, consumptive, and distorted in the spine, and dropped into the grave before she was twenty, still regretting to me, on her deathbed, that Mrs. Frankland had the misfortune to have gone out on that day; as she was, when inspected in the Park, found all so handsome, save that ugly Bath-made bonnet! It was consolation, when I confirmed Mary's protestations of the bells being still ringing, when she was near the house; and that, if Mrs. Frankland's patience had been equal to Madame's punctuality, the bonnet might have been in time for church and Park, and the disgrace prevented. To Madame, this might only be sorrow at the loss of a dozen orders for bonnets similar to the one worn by a pretty new face; but to poor dying Mary, making ornaments for herself as she sat up in bed, it was "stuff of the conscience," that a lady whom Mr. Richard Taylor knew should have been so very unfortunate, and she concerned.

I know not what has tempted me into this digression on the female labourers in the London fashion-factories. Thinking of them, I am convinced that Cowper included women in the general term, when he exclaimed —

> There is no flesh in *man's* obdurate heart —
> It doth not feel for man!

What a blessing to Helena Frankland, as well as to little Mary Coxe, had both females been early taught to discern and cleave to the universal constituents of real happiness. Thus, what had prevented the curvature of Mary's spine, might haply have averted the distortion of Helena's mind.

Months passed — it was the height of the London season — and I saw little of Frankland, and heard much more than I wished. When we chanced to meet, though his kind-

ness was undiminished, there was restraint upon our intercourse, which soon made it, from being stiff, become painful. Each, in relation to the other, was labouring under the load of a reserve of thought, completely destructive of the comfort and freedom of friendly intercourse, especially as neither could treat the opinions the other formed of his conduct and sentiments with indifference. Our way of life, besides, lay every day farther apart. The beauty and musical talent of his wife, the attractions — perhaps I might say, the allurements — of her sisters, his own celebrity, and, more than all, the fresh vogue and combined force of the various *agremens* of his house, made it the resort of many of the better order of fashionable people, as well as of the host of the frivolous; and of persons distinguished by merit and accomplishment, eminent in the professions, in the arts, in literature, and in public life, whom it was pride and pleasure to entertain and to meet, but for the one dreadful reflection, how or where was all this to end, to a man without fortune, without large professional income, and placed in the most expensive capital in the world.

An interesting class of persons whom one was sure to meet at Mr. Frankland's evening parties were foreigners — accomplished men, generally of liberal opinions — some of them refugees, Italians, Poles, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Belgians, and natives of America — whose presence, it was alleged, I never could resist, even when I set my face the most determinedly against both fashionable parties and what Miss Vane called *prudential dinners*. These were the dinners which that lady, in her wisdom, began to make her sister barter against the expectation of increasing professional employment for her husband. The great man, the head of the house of Vane, though he countenanced the young couple, was nearly as powerless in this respect as were Mrs. Frankland's songs, with her sisters' blandishments, and her husband's dinners, to boot.

It was painful to me to hear that Frankland's professional business was falling off, at the very time when increase became so necessary to him. To this many small causes contributed, against which his great abilities and new connexions offered no counterpoise. His locality, the dissipation of time and thought attendant on his mode of life, and perpetual and torturing mental anxiety, were gradually disqualifying him for his diminishing duties; and the shrewd, professional men, who seldom refused to assist at Miss Caroline Vane's "*prudential dinners*," affected to believe, that Frankland, devoted to literature, and politics, and engaged in fashionable life, could have no serious desire to fight his way into practice as a barrister.

No one could exactly tell what his views might be. It was no one's concern; and, in London, there are so many *dashing* families, whose means are mysteries, that this case, even to the gossiping inquirers, made but one more of the sort.

Frankland, about this time, became more closely connected with a new set of acquaintances. Though official duty absolved Lord Tilsit from all social ceremonies, save with personages in high station, and though he never appeared at Mrs. Frankland's evening parties, he sometimes saw the family, with his other connexions, in private; and Frankland, in spite of the bad odour of his liberalism, was often invited to his friendly dinners. There he met with one or two individuals, already well known to him by character, as rising politicians upon the thriving side: — under-secretaries, second-rate speakers in Parliament, and noted partisan writers. Arrogance was no part of his proud nature; and, I believe, he rated himself too justly to be overpowered by their civilities and flatteries, yet the candid and favourable appreciation of an able adversary must ever be peculiarly grateful to a generous mind. If Frankland retained his original repugnance to the opinions of these gentlemen, his aversion to their personal characters abated by intimacy. It is not possible to retain strong dislike to those with whom one voluntarily meets every day in pleasant society. Frankland, who was prevailed with, to join one of their social and literary clubs, forgot that he had so lately haughtily regarded the men with whom he now associated, as hollow trimmers or interested sycophants of power, some of them adding the meanness of the place-hunter to the malignity of the bigot or the rabid frenzy which marks the conscious renegade. Compliments were now frequently paid to his talents in their party journals; and hopes were expressed of him, which begot fear among those old friend on whom he began to look coldly, and who were gradually falling off, in doubt and perplexity, though no decided act yet gave colour to their suspicions.

It could scarcely be laid to Frankland's charge, that his wife's unmarried sisters, the fair relations of Lord Tilsit, had obtained, through his Lordship's interest and the kind-

ness of the Dean, pensions less unjustifiable in principle than many that are granted, and not large in amount. But the ladies lived in his family, and one of the *Liberal* journals, upon this circumstance, commenced a series of attacks, which, I fear, enabled Frankland to palliate to himself the contempt he was beginning to avow for the whole liberal party; as if the ill-nature of all the editors in the world, and the fierceness, envy, or meanmindedness of a few vulgar partisans, could bring disgrace upon the public principles which they supported, often, indeed, with suspicious honesty and singularly bad taste. In the same, or some similar quarter, it was soon afterwards asserted that Frankland was the author of an article in a high Tory periodical publication, which contained an elaborate defence of the attempt made by the Duke D'Angouleme upon the liberties of Spain. His "brilliant and pointed style" was pretended to be recognised; and passages were contrasted with what were known to be his earlier writings, in proof against him; while the ministerialists were sneeringly congratulated upon gaining the *disinterested* and faithful lawyer. His intimacy with some gentlemen connected with the French embassy made the proof positive. The amount in snuff-boxes or Napoleons received from the French Court was hinted at—not specified.

At another time, he might have despised these attacks; but Frankland, sensitive to the intense extreme which makes life misery, now suffered under that perpetual fever of the mind, when every trifle irritates and inflames. In a paroxysm of fury, his eyes darting maniacal fires, while the cold perspiration burst over his high, pale forehead, I saw him tear asunder the miserable printed sheet, which he dashed into the fire. In the next instant, the recoil of his feelings filled him with indignant shame at having been moved by so unworthy a cause, and at thus betraying his feelings.

"These reptiles of the press," he exclaimed, forcing a bitter smile—"these cold, creeping, slimy, venomous things—are, of themselves, enough to disgust any man with the cause they pretend to advocate. The Tories are, at least, persons of high and gentlemanly feelings."

"Some of them," was my reply; "nor are their journals a whit less capable of lying a little and slandering a good deal, than those of their neighbours. Much depends on the spectacles through which a man reads this sort of things."

Frankland was in the mood to find a sneer, even in this pointless remark. He quivered as he regarded me; but I had sufficient presence of mind to look quite unconscious, and his better part of man prevailed. I have read, in some forgotten German author or another, an essay upon the Demoniacal Element in the human mind. I am afraid that, in high-toned spirits, there is always a liberal infusion of what my author would have considered this principle, ready to be called forth by causes more slight than those which were pressing upon my friend. In him it began to be strongly developed. He was now near the close of his first year of married life, occupying a conspicuous place in society, without any thing like adequate professional employment; at the end of his narrow means, and involved in the most harassing kind of debts—not, indeed, what the world would term very large in amount, but more torturing in their consequences than if the hundreds had been thousands. His original error had been the acceptance, or rather the occupation of the mansion with which Lord Tilsit had dowered his wife, as a home to her whole family. But, perhaps, it was too much to expect that Frankland, in the honeymoon, spent, as the newspapers echoed for a month, "at Coombe Abbey, the delightful seat of Lord Tilsit, in Devonshire," could tell his Helena, that the town residence now belonging to her, of which she prattled with affectionate gaiety, as *our* house, *our new home*, where life was to open in joy, and flow on in endless felicity,

And all go merry as a wedding bell—

was not a fit dwelling for them; that their safe, humble home must be selected among those of her husband's rank and professional standing; and that years on years must revolve, and find her at a distance from the privileged localities where Helena doubted not that she was to reign.

Like too many men of liberal feelings and noble natures, Frankland was not one of nice calculation. Of money he never had possessed much, and what he had, passed through his fingers like counters, with no check, save that high integrity which had hitherto limited his wants, so as to ensure the avoidance of those pecuniary meannesses, which to a man of his temper, would have been unendurable.

The impropriety and imprudence of establishing himself in Berkeley Square, had certainly crossed Frankland's mind; but his new female relatives expatiated so *prudently*

upon the advantages of what they called "starting well," and the indelicacy of not appropriating, and yet making profit of Lord Tilsit's magnificent marriage gift of the house, that I suppose no decided opposition was made to the scheme which was to keep their "sweet Helena out of some low quarter where nobody would visit her." Before Frankland was well aware of what he was about, he therefore found himself established in a splendid residence, completely furnished, and yet wanting many things; without a shilling of income, save the precarious gains of his pen and his profession, and the main dependence of a set of women whom I cannot call of extravagant habits, considering that they had been fostered in luxury not the less craving and insatiate in its demands that it had often been meanly, if not furtively, indulged. It was their notions that were false and perverted—their whole scheme and scale of life that was radically overcharged and evil; for, I believe, its details were, in many points, managed by Miss Caroline Vane, with vigilance and economy which bordered upon meanness.

It is worthy of notice, that, while persons of the middle class were exclaiming against the extravagance of the Franklands, the order of serving-men and maids were railing at the shabbiness and stinginess of "the people in Lord Tilsit's house," where the poor servants never saw wine, and were stinted of their beef and beer. Want of economy—if by economy we mean making the most out of a given income—is, after all, not the prevailing fault of the age. The error lies in the construction of the scale—in the endless number of the wants to be supplied:—that dangerous error, which ties down and narrows the mind to a wretched and paltry system of perpetual pinching and farthing calculation, the object of which is not prudent saving to gain money or ease of mind, but to attain the power of ostentatious expense in some other direction of vanity or imaginary necessity.

Involved and struggling on in this pernicious system, from my soul I pitied a man with the feelings of Frankland, even when I blamed him the most. Distinguished above his fellows by force of intellect, his volition, like that of nine-tenths of all mankind, was, to his understanding, as a dwarf to a giant. With the clearest perception of moral rectitude, the warmest admiration of the free, the manly, and the independent in thought and action, he wanted strength of will to cleave to that principle which is the foundation-stone of all those virtues—that principle, without which Marvel had, perhaps, been a court parasite, and Milton a hireling churchman.

Why do we not at once remove the standard of the truly noble in character from the mind's capacities of thought, to its power of resolution and fortitude in action or in resistance? Why not at once dethrone the proud usurper, Intellect, and instal Virtue in what ought to be her own high place? Why not proclaim Goodness as the supreme on earth, and Genius as not more than her noblest minister? —The indulgence, the tender charity, with which it is thought graceful to judge the errors and vices of men of genius and of distinguished ability, are they not treason against the best interests of man? But leaving this grand moral revolution—which might place a gray-haired peasant above a court preacher; and a poor artisan, who, under the temptation of a bribe at a borough election, disdained to betray his country or belie his conscience, above a Burke—I must return to my friend.

Alas! that he also should have afforded so remarkable an instance of the moral frailty which the world has so often had to lament in its master minds,—the minds, whose scope of thought and of imagination seems too often only to widen the range of trial and temptation, while it communicates no corresponding power of resistance!

The facilities of credit which London affords to the thoughtless might have been pleaded as excuse for Helena, but not for the carelessness of Frankland. Exhibiting a specious exterior, and connected with a powerful family, credit, the bane of so many persons setting out in life, had been pressed upon the young couple by their different tradesmen. Milliners, jewellers, perfumers, music-sellers, confectioners, mercers, upholsterers, and an attendant host, besides the more humble butcher and grocer, competed for the custom of the celebrated barrister, who had married the niece of Lord Tilsit, and lived in a house whence each had drawn so much good money. The servile eagerness, the absolute fatuity, with which many London tradesmen offer credit, almost deserves the punishment it so often brings. The self-complacence, the good natured vanity of Helena, were gratified in obliging those most obliging, assiduous, respectful people, who, having had "the honour of supplying Lord Tilsit's family," so earnestly solicited her

orders. It was a pleasant and matronly pastime, to drive out with her mother or her sisters, after a long luxurious morning of music, and gratify those kind creatures by ordering quantities of the pretty things with which they tempted her. She had also got the very common idea that married women are, in right of their condition, entitled to elegancies and indulgences denied to spinsters, unless the costly articles are presented to the young ladies by their family or friends. On this notion she acted generously, both to herself and her sisters, abetted by the praises of her weak and doating mother, and unchecked, save by the remonstrances of her elder sister — a worldly-minded woman, of mean and perverted principles, but of shrewd sense — who soon perceived, that, upon this system, the family must hurry to the end of the game, long before any of them had obtained time to play the advantageous part her ambition had forecasted. This clever woman, in her progresses, during ten years, among great houses, had learned the great world well. She was also, I believe, affectionately attached to her younger sister, and proud of the talents of her new brother, which were, in her calculations, the means to an end. The abilities and reputation of the husband were already of more consequence with Lord Tilsit, than the beauty and fascinations of the wife, though she was an acknowledged favourite with her noble relative. It was, therefore, clear to Miss Vane, that the worldly prosperity of the whole family depended upon the use Frankland made of his powers; and, in her whole life, the idea of success had never once occurred to her, unconnected with *patrons* and *family interest.*

But Frankland required delicate management. Something might be made of his passionate mind by irritation — nothing by flattery. The senseless insults and mortifying suspicions, to which his equivocal situation and quick feelings gave point, and the tears into which she could at any time throw Helena, by scornfully pointing to these slanders in the newspapers, were more powerful auxiliaries to Caroline, in alienating her "brother," as she affected to call him, from the perils of unthriving Liberalism, than all her address. It appeared her study, to find out whatever could be twisted into an insinuation against him, whether in speech or print, if proceeding from what she pretended to consider his party; and to dwell with exultation upon the more just and generous appreciation which his political opponents made of his qualities. And Helena's triumph in the praise, and wet-eyed indignation at the blame, were ever the ready medium to convey the desired impression to the mind of her husband, which had first been adroitly given to herself. Miss Vane would, for example, take occasion, in the hearing of Frankland, to assure me, that "she despised this vulgar malice, as much as her brother could do, for his soul; but that *our* Radical friends ought to have some mercy upon female feelings. Did they suppose that wives and sisters were stocks and stones? To a creature of such quick sensibility as Helena, and devoted, as she was, to her husband — living but in him — these insinuations against his honour were absolutely murderous. And directed against such a man! To what splendid account might his talents and eloquence be turned! How mortifying to see him so neglected — his faculties running to waste, and with so lovely and gifted a creature — and soon, probably, other dear and helpless beings depending upon his prospects, which she was sorry to find so very, *very* far from satisfactory." And now the whole truth came out — "If he had *her* spirit, he would make himself of consequence to one party or another."

This was first plainly said one morning that I called by the particular request of Frankland, who had sent me a note, saying he wished to see me on a business in which I could be useful to him. The hope of being of use or comfort to Frankland, grieved and angry as I was alternately made by the reckless course he was pursuing, was motive enough with me to any exertion of friendship. My resentment at his ill-judging scheme of life, strong when I saw him not, could never, for five minutes, stand against his bland smile and the witchery of his conversation.

On my way to Berkeley Square, I met Jack Greene with a face of remarkable extension and gravity. For the last six months, he had almost lived in Frankland's house, enchanted with every thing around him, and in love with all the three ladies at once. When informed whither I was going, he requested leave to walk with me part of the way; and began —

"Great favourite as you are with Mrs. Frankland and the young ladies, I think you don't so often visit Frankland as when he was a bachelor, Mr. Richard."

"I may have been fearful that the excessive

kindness and blandishments of so many charming women would turn my head and make a fool of me:—I never could resist pleasant female flatteries," was my pragmatical reply.

"There is certainly no house in London so attractive,—save for one consideration."—— He hesitated.

"That there is an execution in it? Is that what you mean?—Or, is the thing so wonderful?—has there been only *one*?"

"You always delighted in a startling manner, Mr. Richard. I did not mean that distressing affair—immediately: it is, I fear, one of the natural consequences—one of the concomitants of a course of—of—".

"Shall I help you out—Of improvidence, folly, infatuation—of the vanity of wives, and the mistaken indulgence of husbands. Oh, that the world's dread laugh—that hyena laugh!—should have power over a mind like Frankland's!"

"You would wrong me much, sir, if you suppose that I do not feel to the depth of my soul for our friend. What pity, that, with his liberal spirit, fortune has not done him more justice—or that his means are not more ample. But it is a bad affair—a serious affair for a married man. I once took the liberty of giving a hint to Frankland—by letter, for I durst not have spoken to him—of my plan, which, I have reason to know, the ladies approve——"

"And what did your conjoint wisdom propound? At least, I hope clever Caroline suggested that you should lend her no more money for their housekeeping. Why did you not say so to her long ago? Do you imagine your facility real friendship either to Frankland or his wife?"

"'Twas, at least, so intended," returned the good-natured fellow, with an air of blended vexation and pique, which quite disarmed me; "and," he continued, in a more impressive tone, "to see Frankland and his charming wife so distressed, breaks my very heart—but what more can I do?"

"Nothing—probably you have done too much already, when one considers to what it all tends."

"And yet for Frankland!—You do not guess half what I owe him. Last year, he rescued me from being plundered and degraded by others: now, he has saved me from making a fool and a villain of myself——"

"Prevented you, perhaps, from marrying his sister-in-law, Harriet—from deeply injuring an innocent and virtuous girl, to whom you have long been engaged—and making yourself wretched for life. Yes, he is capable of the noblest actions!"——

"And you know it all! It has been a most perplexing affair. How cautious every unmarried man ought to be! I protest, before Heaven! nothing was farther from my intention than making this unhappy, though, to me, most flattering impression, upon a beautiful and too susceptible girl."

I almost laughed aloud.

"If half my fortune could atone to her feelings for this cruel mistake——"

"The half is very good, but the whole would be better. Miss Harriet went for the whole hog—depend on it:—but how has Frankland crossed her true love?—He is still himself, and, with all his faults, a glorious being."

I was already aware, from different sources, that the whole Vane family would have winked hard at a runaway match between Harriet and "Dorsetshire Laura's lover." Even Mrs. Frankland, who perfectly understood the nature of his engagements, thought it "more eligible, that poor Jack Greene, one of their own set, whom they all liked so much, should marry Harriet, since he admired her so excessively, and she had so warm a prepossession for him, rather than the *low person* with whom he had had some boyish entanglement, before he succeeded to the fortune, which ought quite to alter and raise his views in life. Frankland had hurt her cruelly, by ill-judged interference with the young people, who, surely, could best manage their affairs themselves."

All the women concerned, as if by intuition, had, at first, felt the necessity of concealing this affair from Frankland. Miss Caroline even acted so dexterously, as to leave him in doubt to the last whether she had not disapproved of Harriet's passion and Greene's idiotic involvement in the foolish predicament of being in love with four women at once, and about to marry the one he probably liked the least.

The manner in which Frankland terminated the affair was quite characteristic. Apprized of what was impending, he ordered Timothy to show Mr. Greene into his private room when he next visited the ladies; for Frankland was now so closely engaged with his pen, as seldom to join them till dinner-time. Greene informed me that, when he was announced, Frankland pointed to him to sit down, and was silent until he had finished his page, or his letter. As he folded his

paper, he said, "I have been so busy in playing the fool myself, Jack, that I have had no leisure to attend to your motions. They tell me you are in love with my wife and her two sisters—perhaps with her mother also, who is still a very pretty woman:—all that, however, is of small consequence; but the thing looks serious when marriage is talked of.

"*You shall not marry Harriet Vane.* Do you hear me? I, your friend, say so; and you may now go up stairs and tell the ladies as much; or let me do it for you, which will be wiser.—You marvel at this high tone from a man who owes you so much money; but I know you much better than you do yourself. You imagine yourself in love—and so, I hope, you still are—with Martha Ashford. Go down to Dorsetshire, and you will discover it. Try if that true-hearted sensible girl will still accept of you. But tell her first how your friend Frankland has plundered you, though he would not permit you to marry his wife's sister. As soon as you are married, come back here, if you are of the mind, and I shall then give you leave to be in love with my wife's sisters as much and as long as you please."

Greene, half-frightened by the peremptory mandate, was, nevertheless, secretly pleased, I believe, at this energetic cutting of the Gordian knot of the silken cord so skilfully coiled around him. He protested his honour, his innocence, his unappeasable regret, for having been the unconscious means of disturbing the serenity of a lovely woman, whom, though he admired excessively—who could avoid that?—with his engagement and early attachment, he could not hope to render so happy as she deserved to be. But how was it to be broken to her?

"Leave that to me," Frankland had replied. "Since one woman, at least, must die for your love, Jack, 'tis heroic in me to say, it shall be my own sister-in-law whom I doom to the sacrifice. And now, I advise you to be off: this house is no proper place for you."

The advice had been acted upon: and Greene confessed to me how much he felt relieved by his friend's decision, and how sincerely he hoped Miss Harriet would *soon* forget him. His vanity, I perceived, could have accepted of a trifle of love-lornness.

I was not very uneasy on the score of Miss Harriet's woe, although, when I was shown into the back drawing-room, I found all the ladies of the family assembled save Harriet, who had "a bad headache." Mrs. Frankland and her mother were seated on the same couch. I believe they had both been crying. In the appearance of the former there was painful change visible to me.

Helena was apparently near the term of her confinement; dispirited and languid; and not so carefully and expensively attired as it was her delight to be. A look of repining, amounting almost to the expression of discontent, had taken possession of her lovely placid features. Her tones were drawling and querulous; and I fancied her, for the first time, very like her mother; yet I could not regard her without deep interest. The conversation which I have noticed above, took place. Caroline was the oracle of her family; and when she talked of the use to which Frankland might apply his powers if he were placed in a more favourable position, Helena began to suspect that her husband knew less of the necessary science of "getting on in life" than her accomplished sister, or even than herself.

"Have you seen Mr. Frankland lately?" she languidly asked of me. I had not. "Then, I fear you will find him looking wretchedly ill. He has sold his horse, and takes no exercise."

"The fag of business and the fatigues of fashionable life united, will tell, even in a single season: one is enough—but both are the deuce."

"Mental anxiety, too," added Caroline, gravely.

"He wants change of air almost as much as Dr. Coddler says mamma and I do," said the wife, peevishly. "Every body, at this season, goes a month or two somewhere, on the coast—to Brighton, or any where."

"Hush, Helena!" said her sister. "Poor Helena is nervous this morning."

"It is unfortunate, when professional men marry before they have ascertained their prospects," said their mother, in a tone that piqued me.

"It is, ma'am.—Your son-in-law knew better: his prospects were well ascertained, hopeful—nay, brilliant."

"Would to Heaven, that, for the sake of my dear child, I could believe you, sir," returned the old lady, almost sobbing with anger; and Helena fairly burst into tears.

"He needed but fair play, time, and ease of mind, to rise to the head of his profession," I said, warmly; "but a lawyer, of all men, requires a free and disengaged mind. To leave the burden of both the home and the

foreign departments upon him, with inadequate ways and means to boot, is somewhat like overtasking."

"No young people could have started with such advantages," whined the old lady: "my daughter so caressed by every body—always so great a favourite in the best society. A handsome house in so good a part of London, without costing him one sixpence, and the countenance of Lord Tilsit and his friends, must have made any young man's fortune, if there were not something radically wrong —I cannot tell what, I am sure; but the consequences are painfully apparent in the face of my dear child. Helena, my love, had you not better lie down for an hour?—You will be out of voice as well as looks to-night."

"You, who are so prudent, will not be surprised at my mother's natural anxiety for those young people, Mr. Richard," whispered Caroline; "nor must you imagine that mamma undervalues Mr. Frankland;—far indeed from that!"

"With Frankland's splendid genius, and *our* good connexion and family interest, mamma considers it his own fault, however, that he does not more distinguish himself," said Helena. "Mr. Rigby and every one says so. You know how much it has been our ambition that Mr. Frankland should make a figure in life"——"And then," I mentally added, "his beautiful wife might have money enough to purchase ornaments, give private concerts, and be generous to her relations, and kind, indeed, to every one around her, if it cost her no sacrifice or exertion of body or mind."

Pride in her husband's attainments and high character might have been an auxiliary to the unestablished virtues of this really amiable woman, had his qualities not been found thus early so utterly unproductive of the money power—of commanding those things she had been taught to consider the absolute necessaries, as well as the chief enjoyments of life. Genius not convertible into the current coin of the realm, may be a fine thing enough for ladies to read of in a book; and, even to men of the world, may seem noble and venerable, looking back through the lapse of a century, or through the dim vista which shows the blind schoolmaster, John Milton, seated at his organ in his mean, obscure dwelling; but, in actual contemporary life!——really Mrs. Vane "had no opinion of geniuses: those geniuses were always poor or struggling, and often, she was sorry to say, suspected of being tainted with infidel principles. Even since her daughter had married Frankland, Mr. —— had got a silk gown; and, it was believed, the next move would carry him to the bench, or, at all events, make him Solicitor-General."

"The great drawback with Frankland is not being in Parliament," cried Helena, raising herself with some vivacity. "A literary man, or a lawyer, people who know the world well tell me, is nothing in society, until he get into Parliament. We all hoped he would make a great figure in public life. Did not you, sir?"

"He has made a great figure already, ma'am."

"So great," cried the politic Caroline, "that it quickens one's ambition for him."

"And he might have been in Parliament before this time," continued Helena, her colour rising, "but for some extravagant ideas which obstruct——"

"Hush, dear love!" interrupted Caroline: "you agitate yourself too much. Do, mamma, make Helena lie down. The truth is, we all have a prodigious ambition for Mr. Frankland: an only brother, and the sole gentleman among so many ladies, is, no doubt, a person of vast consequence to us: yet I revere his scruples—though air is not more free than Frankland would have been, representing the borough of Trimmington."

"Save on a very few points, really of no manner of consequence that I can perceive, and rather understood than expressed," added Helena. "Indeed, Mr. Richard, so true a friend as you must persuade Frankland. I am certain he has the highest respect for your judgment, which would go very far to influence him."

"I should rejoice to see Mr. Frankland in Parliament, as I am certain no man is better able to do his country good service there."——

"I was sure of it!" cried Helena. "Then we must make a joint set upon him. Greene has pleaded till he is tired."

"Hear me out, ladies:—Provided he come into the House of Commons with those principles and views which have hitherto guided his political life, and on which alone he can now act with honour to himself and usefulness to the country."

Mrs. Frankland sunk silently back in her couch, with a look of haughty chagrin; and her mother, I suppose, suspended her projected hospitable order for refreshments, as she took her hand from the bell.

"This is all misconception, Helena," said Caroline, eagerly: "depend on it, you and Mr. Richard are at one in your views for Frankland. Give him time for reflection. And I must not have you say one word to him, sir, on this subject: he may fancy we women have been attempting to get you to join our conspiracy; and you know the gentleman we have to deal with."

Visiters were announced in the front drawingroom; and Caroline, evidently wishing me off, was, however, compelled to leave the field free to me, enjoining Helena soothingly and emphatically, to keep quiet, and not to agitate herself — to have a little patience and all would be well: it was all misunderstanding.

Mrs. Frankland and her mother were simple women compared with the retreating lady, whose faculties had been developed by so early and extensive an intercourse with the great world. Bit by bit, their several grievances were revealed to me, in anger, in sorrow, or in involuntary bursts of weak confidence. Helena's lingering pride in her husband, and the greater delicacy of her youthful mind, acted as a restraint; and she sometimes endeavoured to check her mother, who volubly poured forth a catalogue of female grievances and wrongs, all chargeable upon Frankland's poverty, or, perhaps, his integrity, though indirectly laid to his temper and parsimonious habits. Such charges would have astounded himself. The old lady, who stood in considerable awe of her son-in-law when he was present, seemed absolutely to rejoice in an opportunity of railing at him to his friend and before his wife; feebly opposed by Helena's—"Oh, mamma! Stay, mother! — Mamma's extreme tenderness for unworthy *me* makes her almost unjust to my husband. It is all the fault of his position — indeed it is, mother."

I resolved to hear them out, and to learn how unjust and contemptible it was possible for women to be.

"And whose fault is that?" exclaimed Mrs. Vane, with an inflamed face. "What keeps him hanging on in this wretched way, which makes you so miserable? He is in debt to every body. An execution at this moment in his house——"

"Hush, mamma! for Heaven's sake! Why expose these matters — even to a friend."

"I will not hush, Helena! — let Mr. Frankland's friends, let all the world know the condition to which he has brought my child: — without the merest necessaries — destitute of every comfort required by her delicate condition."

Was it the chosen wife of Frankland that was thus situated! Helena's tears accompanied the woful statement in profuse floods. She reclined on her mother's neck, dissolved in tender pity for her beautiful self and her unmerited conjugal afflictions, when Timothy announced a young woman, from a cheap baby-linen warehouse in the city, with things ordered on the previous day. The mere announcement acted as a counter-charm with both ladies; and, though Helena at first peevishly refused to look at the things, or to admit the girl, her mother's curiosity prevailed.

I now expressed my belief that Frankland had forgotten me, and would have left the ladies to their consultation, had not Helena, whose good-humour partly returned at the sight of so many pretty articles of dress for ladies and babies, entreated me to remain as a known critic in work and lace, and a nice chamber counsel. Grief was now forgotten in admiration. Every thing was beautiful! some few articles were exquisite! — but the perfection of all, was a suit of baby-linen, the exact counter-part, in pattern and quality, of one Mrs. Vane had seen with Lady Amen's youngest daughter, who had married the city banker, and so — enviable woman! — had whatever she wished for, like the lady in a fairy tale. I remarked that, while Helena was so far under the influence of new and delightful feelings as to look with the fondest longing upon the baby robes and little caps, the old lady cast her warmest regards upon the laced muslin wrapping gowns, and such lady caps as would ornament *her* child; on whom she fitted and tried them, exactly as a little girl may with her doll; quite happy, apparently, and entirely forgetful of debts, executions, and the character she had attributed to her son-in-law. I was divided between pity and contempt for beings so frivolous; yet it was impossible to resist some degree of sympathy with their evident admiration and enjoyment, as they tumbled over the goods, coveting every thing, then selecting, and then dismissing the girl, to prudently calculate the cost — a necessary precaution, now that Frankland was become "so stingy."

The affair was ultimately concluded by the mother, who purchased to the amount of some £40 or £50, of things which I took the liberty of thinking very trash, including a couple of caps, which Helena insisted upon

keeping for mamma, appealing to me if they were not exceedingly becoming to that worthy lady. Mrs. Vane certainly declined them: but, in the strife of affectionate generosity, yielded to the daughter; who declared, that, if mamaa refused them, she would have none of those other "mere necessaries" to the wife of a man plunged in debt and difficulty, and struggling for the very means of daily bread. I am ashamed to mention the wretched trifles in which these unthinking women showed their power to involve, and so far to dishonour, the man whom the one loved and the other feared.

The mother carefully arranged the new purchases, while a packet of music was brought for Helena, which placed her amiable weaknesses, at least, in a more captivating light. She had viewed "the mere necessaries" with eager pleasure, and the desire to appropriate them; but in the music of the new opera, a selection from which was to be performed by herself and her friends, that night, in her own house, there was inspiration that instantly kindled her passion for her art; and, animated and beautiful, and full of a rapturous enjoyment, forgetful of every thing around her, she played and sang for an hour and a half, sometimes calling on us to admire — and her mother's *bravas* never failed — and once or twice charming me, by exclaiming, involuntarily — "How I wish James were here! — this passage is for him!"

But he came not. He had surely forgotten that I was in the house, by his own desire, and waiting his leisure. I took the liberty of sending Timothy to bring me to his recollection.

"Frankland is become the most absent creature," said Helena, throwing herself into her couch, exhausted with her passionate musical fit. "Writing whole mornings — six and eight hours on end — taking no proper exercise, and shunning society. You must pardon mamma, though," she whispered: "she does not quite understand Mr. Frankland: and mothers are apt to be exacting — for *pet* daughters, you know. Caroline has much more sense than all of us together; and, from the hour I married, she has been constantly saying, that Frankland *must get into Parliament.* I assure you, Mr. Richard, I shall consider no man my husband's friend, or the friend of his family, who says otherwise." This was said with energy quite unexpected in Helena. I bowed.

"We are to have some charming people here to-night — and *one*, particularly, who, though a foreigner, Caroline thinks may be useful to Mr. Frankland. I hope, in mercy, I shall be in voice. Do you think I am in voice to day, mamma? I did improve in my last air ——"

"In beautiful voice, my love; but you must lie down."

"You may fancy us rather gay for this particular time," observed the prudent old lady; "but, as Mr. Frankland, from some crotchet, has positively forbid his wife to sing at other people's houses for the last month — even at Lord Tilsit's — we can neither lock our doors against those who are dying to hear her sing, nor debar Helena from the only pleasure left her — that of giving pleasure to her friends by her talent."

"The only pleasure left the wife of Frankland!" I shrugged my shoulders. "Her life should be all pleasure."

"My good sir, what are you dreaming of?"

"Of a New Earth, madam."

"It cannot, indeed, be this one, in which poor women's trials are appointed," returned the old lady, smartly.

"Mamma is thinking now of Harriet," said Helena. "Mr Frankland gave us all so terrible a jobation the other day, for allowing that good, silly, generous creature, Jack Greene, to fall in love with my second sister."

"It was too bad," cried the old lady, reddening with sudden passion — "too, too bad — indelicate and improper, and entirely out of the line of Mr. Frankland's duty to my family. Is it not enough that he has ruined one daughter, without blasting the prospects of another?"

"Don't say so for me, dear mamma," returned the daughter, about, however, to give way to tears. "But it was inconsiderate, indeed — cruel to *me*, was it not? — to break off a match which my mother approved, and on which my sister and Mr. Greene had set their hearts?"

"Oh, Mr. Richard Taylor!" whined the old lady, her handkerchief at her eyes, "conceive the situation in which Mr. Frankland's high peremptory temper has placed *me!* One unhappy child in the interesting condition of dear Helena, and with such dark and melancholy prospects! — another dear girl wounded in her tenderest hopes." —

"Mr. Greene's house in the country would always have been a pleasant retreat for mamma," chimed in Helena, "while Caroline is with friends, whatever should become of

wretched *me*." It was ever so with these ladies, when driven off their guard. I struggled to keep down my indignation. Many good women, of "a certain condition," are apt to be *scoundrels* in matrimonial concerns:—scoundrels, if not so young as to be only fools. In this focus is concentrated the whole *scoundrelism* which the other sex divide and diffuse through all the avenues to fortune. For them there are the sword, the pen, the bar, the bench, the camp, the church, the desk, the counter: the ten thousand paths of success are ever open—while the poor women are bound to the horns of the altar. And this melancholy consideration has always made me judge of their lax matrimonial principles and equivocal projects with indulgence, save when they go the length of downright cheating or swindling. I am, at least, charitable where there is genteel necessity to plead on the one hand, and wealthy temptation upon the other. This, to be sure, of Greene's was rather an aggravated case, as there was a positive engagement well understood; but, as Mrs. Vane said, "Dear, prudent Harriet had been willing to overlook Greene's foolish entanglement, though very strict in her ideas; and it was a maxim with herself that no young lady had any concern with the *liaisons* a gentleman might have formed before he proposed for her. It was, indeed, extremely indelicate. Harriet would have been no daughter of hers if she could have endured those explanations about the Dorsetshire young person, which Mr. Frankland took pains to give her, but which she declined to hear.—And now my daughter vows she will never again speak to Mr. Frankland; and I cannot condemn her."

The disgust I felt for the mother was fast spreading to the daughter, already hopelessly tainted by her vanity and her worse meanness of disposition; and yet, so strangely are good and ill blended, that I was touched by the lively affection, the fond admiration, (the love of instinct and of habit,) which they felt for each other, displayed in soothing and *coddling*, in caresses and flatteries. There might, with great mutual blindness, be an alloy of selfishness in this affection—it might have been found incapable of any heroic sacrifice: but its warmth and sincerity were beyond all doubt.

The time was wearing so rapidly away—its flight unmarked by Helena, who, after her rest, was again absorbed in rehearsing her music, and making experiment of her voice—that I was about to leave the house without seeing my friend, when Timothy returned to announce that his master would receive me immediately; and, in virtue of our old ties, Tim whispered, "Massa Printer's debil boder Massa all dis morning."

I was aware of something like this, and also that Frankland was every day rendered more unfit, by his habits of life and distraction of mind, for the trifling business that now waited his acceptance. Often had he attended in the courts upon the mornings following one of his own and his wife's late parties, nearly without employment, and with, I am sure, an aching head, and foreboding heart; sorrowing or maddening over the headlong course which, circumstanced as he was, he wanted force of character to arrest. At length, he came to be distracted by the most vulgar exigencies of the passing day; finding the literary labours of his long morning—those stimulating and exhausting toils, consuming to a mind at ease, and to him, at this time, murderous—insufficient to meet the wants of the night.

Frankland was doing himself injustice in every way—writing in haste, and far below himself, impelled by the same necessity which sets to work the veriest industrious Grub Street scribbler, whom the aristocracy of literature—that most arrogant and senseless of all aristocracies—ridicules and despises. The spur of his lofty mind was as surely the ignoble one of immediate pecuniary emergency. Papers, the fruits of long labour, and others, the bright transcripts of his mind in happier times, now found their hurried way to the journals. Portions of the long-projected work—that History of English Literature upon which he was to rest his reputation among men of letters, and with posterity—were detached from the main body of the MS wherever it could best bear mutilation, and disposed of, in such instalments, like inferior wares, by this spendthrift of his own wits. The fruits of future projected labours were forestalled; his genius was mortgaged to the publishers; and, what was worse, such mortgages were not always redeemed. I had even heard of him borrowing, or, more properly, trying to borrow, small sums of former friends. It is wonderful how such things creep abroad, even in the bustle of London society; and, need I say, with what degrading and blighting effect? I remarked, that those especially who refused to comply with the humiliating request, were the most certain to vindicate their own prudence and better conduct, by its gratuitous

exposure. In one point alone, Frankland, up to this moment, stood clear:—In spite of the many insinuations, sarcasms, and slanders, thrown out against him by the Liberal press, as it called itself, he had not yet done one act, written one sentence, which could make his friends blush or his enemies triumph. But, alas! how true is it, that, in a downward course, like Frankland's, there is than "the lowest deep a lower deep," into which the struggling man may be precipitated before he is aware of his danger.

It was close upon the dinner hour before the tasked author had been able to accomplish his business; and I was shown to a chamber near the top of the house, where sat the spectre of my former friend. He pressed my hand in silence.

Another man might have apologized and talked "about and about;" but this was not Frankland's temper: his silence was moody and gloomy for several moments, and then he abruptly said, "You have seen Helena—seen her, how miserably changed from the bright creature you beheld last year! You may guess one cause of my misery—God forbid, that any man should be able to imagine all its extent! But this is idle talk."

He pulled out a drawer, took from it a roll of written papers, and, with a forced and ghastly smile, continued—"I have been at work here, you perceive; and you must, to-night yet, if possible, dispose of the fruits of my labour. The story of Johnson composing 'Rasselas,' at the rate of forty pages a-day, in order to bury his mother, is pathetic enough, no doubt: but we have got beyond all that. Johnson was a poor rogue then—a hackney scribbler; much at his ease, in a mean lodging, working for only bread and cheese, with beer to it. These, sir, are the compositions, in prose and verse, of the celebrated Mr. Frankland, who occupies a splendid house in a square—whose beautiful wife is the idol of the fashionable world—whose musical parties *have been* the most attractive in London Tell your chapman all this: the tale will prove attractive—he will get up an advertisement from it, for the Morning papers. And you may heighten the pathos, by adding, that this romance was written by Frankland, even more rapidly than the 'Prince of Abyssinia,' to meet, not the necessary expenses of a mother's burial, but of a wife's——"

The reckless, enforced courage of despair could stretch no farther. He started up, and walked hurriedly across the room, his hand shading his eyes; nor did I dare to address him.

"This is desperate work," he said, seating himself again—"extreme folly. But, somehow, the tone of your voice unmanned me. You comprehend what I exact of your friendship. The sooner I obtain the money the better. Poor Helena relies upon my promise of this morning, to get her money for her occasions. The necessity is extreme: and that execution prevents me from raising even one guinea, though upon my remaining books."

The worst remained to be said; and the haughty spirit struggled and writhed before utterance was given to the caution not to carry the manuscripts to two different publishers named. "They have advanced me small sums. I am in arrear with them. You are aware of the notions of tradesmen; and the purpose of the price of this volume is sacred and urgent. I shall soon make up to them."

I struggled to suppress the commiserating groan which might have offended the pride of my friend, and, with few words, accepted the office. Without going home to dinner, I set about my task. Despatch, and an advantageous or fair bargain, were incompatible. I was not at liberty to use Frankland's name, and my own was not of the kind which passes current with booksellers as a voucher. In happy time, it struck me to employ the agency and influence of Mr. Rigby, with whom I was now slightly acquainted, from having met him once or twice at Mrs. Frankland's parties; and I left the MS. at his house, with an explanatory note. Next morning, I received an answer, expressive of the highest admiration of the work, which had "enchained" Mr. Rigby to his library chair till three in the morning, and requesting an interview.

I had no doubt whatever that the real author was perfectly well known to the Aristarch. He carried me and my papers, in his own carriage, to the great publisher, who requested that he should dictate the terms. They were liberal, almost to excess, as I fancied; though my conscious ignorance, or perhaps avarice for Frankland, kept me silent. Before two o'clock, I treated myself with a cab to Berkeley Square, charged with bills and cash, amounting to a full third of the price which the newspapers, about a month afterwards, stated to have been given for the wonderful forthcoming work, which

was to astonish the fashionable and political world.

One might have imagined, that the relief, the actual joy, which this sum carried into this distressed household — from the master, who could with difficulty conceal his emotion, to Timothy, who instinctively knew and participated in the general satisfaction — one might have been assured, that, though frugality and self-denial, which require long and painful lessons, might not all at once have been taught, yet that great caution would, at this time, have been used in disbursement. It was not money alone that was to be saved here, by the timely exercise of those homely virtues: it was integrity, peace of mind, future well-being, independence in public, and honour in private life.

In the meanwhile, Helena, imagining, I suppose, that my looks, or the extravagance of the cab, boded good, had followed me up stairs to her husband's temporary study; paler than ever, from the exhausting musical vigil of the last night, and wrapt in the invalid shawl which alternated with naked shoulders. I could with difficulty keep down the quick feeling of disgust with which I saw the eager look, the joyful flush with which this beautiful creature regarded the money I had spread upon the table. I hope Frankland was not so quick-sighted. Her joy brimmed over upon me; and then she descended to give her mother the intelligence, which might improve that lady's opinion of genius and of her son-in-law, at least for a few days.

When we had talked about ten minutes longer, a note came up to Frankland from Caroline, suggesting that the execution might instantly be taken off the carriage. Mrs. Frankland's health required air and exercise; but her mother's matronly *experience* had refused, for the last month, to intrust her, either to her legs in the square, or to the worse calamity of being seen in a hackney coach.

The carriage was set free as soon as possible; the most urgent debts were paid; more purchases were made of "merest necessaries;" a sum was laid aside to repay the advances of the booksellers and private loans; and many prudent acts were projected, before I took leave.

When I next called, I found that Mr. and Mrs. Frankland, with Mrs. Vane, had gone to Brighton; and, in a fortnight or less, the newspapers announced that the beautiful Mrs. Frankland, after assisting at a private concert at the Pavilion, where the Russian and Austrian ambassadors, with their ladies, and many of the nobility, were present, was sent home suddenly in one of the royal carriages, and prematurely, but safely, delivered of a daughter! Helena was destined to create sensations in the great world. Princesses left their cards at her lodgings: Duchesses sent baby-linen and caudle cups, to supply the store of "merest necessaries" left behind in Berkeley Square; and one of the *elite* requested to stand god-mother to the infant Georgina.

The old lady was in ecstasy; Lord Tilsit sent down compliments and corals; and Frankland, drinking in joy from the soft eyes of his wife, or bending in unutterable tenderness over his child, forgot the past, and strove to shut his eyes to the future. He now made himself believe that it was cruelty, in the present condition of his wife, to distress her with the details of our plan of letting the Berkeley Square house, laying aside, for the present, Jack Greene's inauspicious gift of the carriage, and being contented with love, and, if not a cottage, yet a very small house, which there was, at least, a fair chance that the exertions of Frankland might maintain in comfort and honour, or, at all events, in respectable — and, therefore, with all the wise and the good — *respected* poverty.

With what dignified philosophy, with what elevated sentiment, was this scheme discussed, in the letters which he wrote me from his wife's chamber, during her confinement! It is so easy to philosophize on paper — ay, and to moralize. Yet the fashionable eclat of the moment, and his latent ambition, were not sufficient to wean him from the sober plan of which his natural dignity of mind, and the recollection of former agonies, made him more and more tenacious. He employed me to look for the kind of house that would suit him; and informed me that he would be in town in the following week, to prepare for the reception of Helena, before he made her aware of his purpose.

I was better pleased that he should negotiate with his wife and her mother at a distance from them. I advised him at once to cut-and-run from the world in which he was so inextricably involved; and, despising the cowardly continental retreats of gay spendthrifts, to fix himself at once where his duties and his future interests lay, whatever mortification false pride might temporarily receive.

If proof against the *sullens*, Frankland was only too susceptible to the influence of smiles

and tears, and silent looks of gentle reproach and entreaty. He was also, I fully believe, already anxious to escape from thinking too closely of some obvious points in his wife's character, lest his judgment should have hurried him into the condemnation from which his yearning affection shrunk. He felt himself bankrupt in the means of rendering his wife happy; and this consciousness covered the multitude of her faults.

From Berkeley Square, immediately upon his arrival, Frankland wrote down to Brighton. His letters afterwards fell into my hands. I do not wish to screen him, nor to lessen his faults. He had been much to blame. To him judgment and foresight had been given in large measure. He knew the world much better than most men of his age, and far better than his young wife. He had none of her peculiar vanities or habits to contend against; and, before God and man, he held the right and the power to control her tastes, for their mutual comfort and benefit. He had failed in these first duties; and now he took the whole blame upon himself, of what was past and irredeemable; and, passionately appealing to her affection, to her feelings, as a wife and a mother, he implored her to make the best of their joint lot; and, in language which I thought far too strong, pathetically lamented the untoward fortune which made it needful that she should, for a time, live apart from those circles she was formed to enjoy and to grace.

Frankland waited the result of this letter with some anxiety, though he must have been far, indeed, from anticipating the blow which struck him to the earth. Helena did not reply to her husband herself. She was alleged to be so much affected by his communication as to be incapable of holding a pen; but her sister Caroline performed the office of amanuensis in her best style of diplomacy, and Frankland, though with a great deal of circumlocution and verbiage, was distinctly informed, "That his wife and her family conceived it a duty which she owed to herself and her unfortunate infant, and even to her husband himself, rather than submit to his proposal, to resume the profession, in prosecuting which she had been interrupted by a marriage contracted with very different prospects from those it had been her fortune to see realized. The general interest and sympathy excited by the youth, beauty, and misfortunes of her unhappy sister, (though far was she from blaming any one, much less Mr. Frankland,) made it probable that her permanent advantage might not have suffered much by the delay which had made her known to a wider and even higher circle of patrons and admirers."

All that Frankland had ever encountered was, with his peculiar feelings, as dust in the balance compared to this. I could not, by any conjecture, divine what had befallen him, when, late at night, Timothy brought me a note, containing these few hardly legible words:—

"Once, when I supposed myself dying, I entreated you to come to me. I then felt that life was dear. I have lived to know that there are things in life that are dearer than life. They are dealing with me now." He did not even request my presence. I had fears for a duel or some dreadful catastrophe; for I knew that the war of impertinent paragraphs had again been renewed against the *Liberal* Barrister, from the date of his wife having obtained the honour of an invitation to the Pavilion, whither, having reluctantly permitted her to go, he naturally and properly accompanied her. I set off for Berkeley Square.

One or two ugly ill-omened visages met me in the vestibule; and I found a man seated in the same room with Frankland, but apart, whom I at once knew to be a bailiff. Was he under arrest?—He was sunk in stupor; but recovered himself so far on my appearance, as to desire the man to wait without the door, and to put Caroline Vane's letter, of four close pages, into my hand.

Heaven forgive me, if, at the first blush of the affair, my heart did bound lightly, as I whispered to myself, "A blest riddance—could he but think so: Frankland required something like this to rouse and restore him to himself." What folly to conclude of his feelings, by my own dispassionate, perhaps disparaging judgment of his wife! Fortunately, I had too much delicacy and respect for my friend, to say what I felt and thought of her, even when my indignation was at the height.

I returned him the letter.

"It is all hollow and false, as you perceive," he said bitterly; "but *she* cannot have ratified it; you know her facility, her gentle submissiveness, and the fatal power those women—her mother's fondness, and her sister's art—have over her resolutions."

"And may I crave to know your purpose?"

"Is it necessary to ask it?—To go down to Brighton—to take Helena's determination

from no lips save her own — and if it be for this——" His colour became livid, his eyes glared upon me for an instant, and he abruptly turned away.

"But you perceive in whose clutches I am," he added, on turning back: "arrested at the suit of my wife's milliner. Madame Royet would have borne every thing, save the affront of Mrs. Frankland taking her Pavilion dress, *on credit*, from a rival house."

This was said in a tone of bitter irony.

"Then, I presume, you cannot go down to Brighton until this arrest is withdrawn?"

"It needed not your quick wit to divine that," he replied, in a tone of haughty petulance, which I patiently endured — giving way to the impatient sallies of the chafed spirit. And, in a little while, he added, "Heaven forgive me! I seem to myself, for this last long year, as if struggling and tossing in some wild dream; but 'tis one from which I shall never awake to peace — *never!—never!*"

"Do not allow yourself to think thus gloomily. You will find Mrs. Frankland exactly what you wish to make her — get her but once away from her family. 'Tis but the intervention of a few more days." He was now walking slowly about the apartment, apparently insensible of my presence, with the fixed, abstracted gaze of a man whose whole thoughts are bent inward.

I could only guess the current of his thoughts, from hearing him murmur, in tones that thrilled me, those ever-memorable words —

"*Alone on my hearth — with my household gods shivering around me! Alone* on my hearth! — These words cling to my brain strangely to-night," he said, at last, "and I trifle away precious time. Their author once prophesied that temptation might make Frankland a scoundrel: but he, at least, honoured me by thinking I should be the slave of a noble ambition — not the weak, pitiful creature of chance and circumstance; that, with a man's choice in my power, I should act the part of a man — ay, though haply a base one. What has my course been, that even my wife's mother claims the right to despise the falterer, the loiterer?"

This was not the mood in which a man may be reasoned with; and I forebore argument, and even consolation, limiting my efforts to enabling him to set off on his journey as speedily as possible. This was attended with considerable difficulty, and the arrangements were not completed until noon the next day. I was informed by Timothy that his master had not gone to bed, but continued either walking or writing all night: and, indeed, the night-guards Madame Royet had appointed him, were not of the kind that shed poppies around a man's couch. When we had got fairly rid of them, I took upon me to discharge the three female servants, and left Timothy in charge of the garrison until I should hear from Brighton.

I can only form an idea of the scenes which passed there, from the events that followed.

The real purpose of his wife's family must have been to force Frankland into their own terms, though it is probable that Helena was not privy to the design. In appearing as a public singer, she imagined herself the victim of overpowering necessity; which, however, was not without its consolations, in the flattering attention which it drew upon her, and the sympathy and admiration excited by what the few patrons, let into the secret, were pleased to rave about, as "The wonderful sacrifice, made by this gifted creature, to her maternal tenderness and filial devotion!"

How falsely are human actions often estimated! The consequences of Frankland's interview, or rupture with his wife, opened the whole female world in full cry upon the monster! who had even threatened to deprive Mrs. Frankland of her infant, if she persisted in her heroic sacrifice. He was of the temper to hold this kind of censure in utter scorn; but the toils were around him, and tenderness effected what neither art nor hostility could have won.

Frankland had just returned to Berkeley Square, overwhelmed with sorrow — having first taken a long farewell of his wife — when he was followed by an express from Brighton, announcing her dangerous illness, and the necessity of his immediate return, if he wished to see her in life. She might have been, I dare say, seriously indisposed — though not in quite so perilous a condition as had been represented. Frankland, without removing his few effects from that fatal home he had resolved to abandon, lost not an hour in obeying the summons. Miss Caroline might, perhaps, by this time, have seen that she had finessed too far. Lord Tilsit had been apprized of the *fracas*, and of the intentions of his fair cousin; and his Lordship appeased the angry and wounded feelings of Frankland by totally condemning what he called the wild, extravagant, and

indecent plan, to which neither Mr. Frankland, nor any man of spirit, could or ought to submit; nor could he perceive the necessity urged. But, allowing it to exist, he still entirely approved of Mr. Frankland's determination. Pecuniary difficulties might be suffered and surmounted,—but the stigma remaining from Helena's scheme, even admitting it to be, on trial, completely successful, would be indelible to her husband and her family. It was not for a moment to be thought of.

Helena could only shed showers of tears, lament her hard fate, and declare her willingness to submit to whatever decision her husband and his Lordship thought best. The latter displayed not merely what the world would call good judgment, but delicacy, and high generosity, in mediating between husband and wife. Before negotiating at all, he insisted upon Helena returning to her home with her child, and leaving her mother, though the journey and cruel separation might be attended with some part of the awful consequences which Mrs. Vane, in the agony of her maternal apprehensions, predicted. This separation of families, in the case of the mother and Harriet he suggested should be final, though it was not yet necessary to apprize Mrs. Frankland of the impending catastrophe. Lord Tilsit's plans were warmly seconded by Caroline. She was probably so far in his confidence, or rather had divined so much of what might be, as now to throw the whole weight of her influence into Frankland's scale.

Caroline accordingly came up to town to nurse her sister; and so manœuvred as to be able to write to me, before I had once seen my friend, "begging my congratulations on the felicitous adjustment of Mr. Frankland's numerous *disagreeables*. Lord Tilsit had acted more like a tender father than any thing else to the young pair. He was the real author of the *solid* happiness, which already made No. — seem a second paradise. I would be rejoiced to learn that our long-cherished hopes for Frankland were about to be realized. Though averse to office, he had at length permitted himself to be nominated a candidate for Trimmington, and with every chance of success." I could not doubt it; and my heart shrivelled within me, as I learned the blasting truth, that the high-minded Frankland had been so completely subdued to the level of his fortunes, as to enjoy temporary relief from that compromise with principle which might rescue him from the distracting pecuniary involvements of the last year, and which restored the bloom and cheerfulness of his wife, and the peace and brightness of his home.

It is sometimes unwise, if not *morally* unsafe, to investigate too nicely those subtleties and sophistries by which the acute conscience-smitten backslider strives to stifle his inward convictions, and fortify himself in wilful error; and especially so if the sinner is one so dear and still so valued as this man was by me.

I durst not trust myself to listen to Frankland's ingenious and seductive fallacies; though I was, perhaps, mistaken in fancying that his pride would have stooped to any kind of vindication or apology for his conduct. Besides this latter impression, I judged it best to leave him to himself. No accuser, I was assured, could rise up in condemnation, half so stern as that which lurked within his own breast. I, therefore, declined the repeated invitations which Mrs. Frankland, in all likelihood prompted by her politic sister, sent me; for an instinctive feeling intimated that my reproachful presence could not, at this time, be welcome to Frankland.

Of the notes which I received from him on trifling matters of business, connected with his book and other things, not one bore the slightest reference to his change of prospects.

The new member for Trimmington, the holder of a patent place, worth about £800 a-year, and called £1800 by some of the newspapers, bore his faculties bashfully, "though the place was one which cost the country nothing," his new friends averred; as Lord Tilsit had been so liberal as to resign it in Frankland's behalf: so it was quite a family arrangement.

It was not mentioned that the pluralist peer had been actually badgered and shamed out of this one office; and that, having no younger son, he disposed of it to the best advantage, by making it over to a near connexion, likely to become an able retainer. There was some recollection of a Parliamentary commission having, long ago, recommended that particular place to be abolished; but the time was perhaps not yet come. And I began to question my own judgment when my brother, my sister Anne, and poor Jack Greene who would have admired Frankland in the galleys, and many other sensible and prudent friends—persons, in private life, of great worth and the strictest integrity—unhesitatingly congratulated me, on Frankland and his lovely wife obtaining so comfortable

an addition to their income, by the generosity of their noble relative. "Nothing to what *they* may look for, no doubt; but a good beginning," said my brother James. "How kind and considerate!" cried the ladies, in one voice. It did them so much good even to hear of such things.

"Better a friend at the court than a penny in the purse," observed my sage Nurse Wilks, when Timothy, more sleek and glossy-sable than for many preceding months, came to gossip, in his broken English, of his master's good luck. Was I then strait-laced in my notions, and scrupulous overmuch? The Liberal journals, which had fiercely assailed Frankland during the heat of the election, did not encourage those charitable doubts. Day by day, he was stigmatized as the mean deserter of his early principles, the base hireling of corrupt power. If such ribald and unscrupulous attacks had formerly maddened a mind supported by the proud consciousness of integrity, how was it now with the conscience-wounded man? His own heart sent up no voice of congratulation when all were rejoicing around him; and the compliments of his acquaintance must often have been felt as insult—the cold, shy, averted looks of old friends as intolerable cutting reproach.

Soon after his election, Frankland entirely deserted the courts,—from being unable, I believe, to meet those oblique regards and covert sneers which tell the deeper that a man is not entitled to notice or resent them. The admiration which he met with in his clubs and in the circles of his new political associates, might, at first, have been some compensation for what, I dare say, he strove —and, I am certain, in vain—to think the injustice of his former party; but his high mind, wrenched from its original bias, never again found its own place. He had forfeited his own esteem; he had become the very being he had, from boyhood, despised. Whither were fled those noble aspirations,—that generous ambition which had animated his youth? Though he might attain to the utmost summit of power, what he had been, must now for ever remain recorded against him. He daily saw himself pictured in some of the prosperous persons around him, whose odious lineaments were not the less disgusting for the fancied resemblance.

Parliament opened. Frankland, had he wanted feeling as much as certain other distinguished renegades, possessed better taste than all at once, to blazon his desertion of the national standard, and to glory in his shame. We have seen persons, who, with less necessity, have acted a worse part—as if impatient for the opportunity of a barefaced abandonment of their principles—as if fearful of being, for a few more days, suspected of cherishing some lingering regret.

There was great curiosity to see how Frankland was to shape his course and what flying bridge his ingenuity was to construct to carry the patriot decently over to the enemy's lines. Was he to feign excessive alarm—a very common pretext with apostates?—And whether was it to be for the safety of the Church, the Monarchy, or which other of our venerable institutions? But night after night passed, and he gave merely a silent, sullen vote with the division to which he was, hand and foot, bound. Was he, then, to pocket his retaining fee, and do no more actual service than the most stolid vociferator of *Ay* or *No* in the House? Mrs. Frankland became impatient for her husband's maiden speech; his friends astonished at his silence; Lord Tilsit displeased by the failure of his reasonable expectations from the champion he had engaged. Frankland spoke, at last, in a frenzy-fit, stimulated to fury by the indecent, though indirect sarcasms levelled at him, in consequence of the wretched pittance lately granted to his sisters-in-law. The spell was now broken. What he considered an unprovoked attack produced fierce retort. His chafed spirit heated in the nightly struggle, the cheers of his stanch party-friends acted upon his excitable sympathies, and animated a contest, which, if not for right, was for glory and mastery. He soon felt his power, and learned to take a fierce joy in its abuse; unheedful of every thing, so that, for the moment, he overwhelmed his adversary by the bitterness of his invective and the blighting of his scorn. On several occasions, he made speeches which the newspapers of his party lauded to the skies, and which, also, drew forth the compliments of his rivals. But they were not exactly upon party questions; and it became a matter of dubiety among the Tory leaders, before the end of the session, if Frankland was, after all, a *safe* man. A useful or zealous partisan he had not yet proved himself, though he had received every kind of encouragement. His new friends feared that he was not what they termed a *practical* man. He often made admissions startling by their candour. He wandered into discussion of constitutional or of abstract principles; and though he might, sometimes,

wisely abstain from their application, he had no talent to fashion his doctrines to the varying hour. In short, he made his political sponsors uneasy; even when holding to the ignoble condition of his bond, and voting, night after night, against his conscience. Liberality of sentiment, so native to his mind that it seemed involuntary or spontaneous, and not to be kept down, shook the confidence of the party in the equivocal partisan, who was a Liberal at heart; and pointed the sneers of those who congratulated themselves upon enjoying the benefit of his speeches, while his votes were given to the other side.

Before the close of the first session, it was fully ascertained that, though Frankland might be a formidable enemy, he was, save for his simple vote, and the celebrity of his name in certain town-circles, almost a dead-weight upon his new friends. It was well known to them that he had earnestly wished for some responsible situation, to improve his straitened pecuniary circumstances, and especially to free him from the degrading imputation of being a bought sinecurist; and different places of moderate emolument fell vacant, which were, in turn, refused to him; either from rising doubts among the higher powers of how far dependence could be placed upon him as a *thick-and-thin* partisan, or from other arrangements. It must soon have become evident to himself, that, however highly he might be considered as a tool, or a useful and keen instrument, of the administration, he must not aspire farther. He was neither constituted with the requisite degree of callousness and flexibility, nor yet endowed with the tact and discretion desirable. He had forfeited the pure fame of his youth; and he lacked the intrepidity which has so often enabled men of his profession, in like circumstances, to vamp up a false reputation by impudent pretension, and maintain it by bustle and effrontery, until the counterfeit passed current with the unthinking world for the real.

It was from this period that Frankland became thoroughly miserable,—his life a burden more than he was able to bear; distrusted, as he imagined, by every party; baffled in that path of perverted ambition upon which his indiscreet involvements had thrust him; degraded before the world, and lowered in his own esteem; finding the wages of his disgrace quite inadequate to the still increasing wants of his household; and the wife of his bosom, the joint cause of his ruin, altogether incapable of comprehending why "Frankland was so very wretched, now that their prospects were so much improved, *would he only exert himself a little more.*"

He rallied a little during the summer and autumn months, which he spent somewhere in the country, in composition; finding at once relief to his spirits, and a needful addition to his income, in literary occupation. But the meeting of Parliament could not be averted by Frankland's reluctance to enact a hateful part. Questions were impending which left no refuge for temporizers. As one of the ablest and most eloquent men of his party, he was expected, for its interests, or in its defence, to unsay all that he had ever maintained; to outrage his feelings; to belie his conscience; to immolate his character in the face of the disgusted public, and that with his own suicidal hand. As the time drew near, his intellect must, I think, have become partially disordered; for the worst part of madness is surely already realized, when the unfortunate man is haunted by the horrible apprehension that his reeling mind is about to be prostrated beneath the accumulating load of a misery composed of so many struggling and chaotic elements.

A lamentable change was now wrought upon his temper, which became fitful, moody, and suspicious—misanthropic gloom alternating with paroxysms of fury, which made the possessed man a terror to himself and all around him. This distressing symptom, was, in part, and I believe rightly, attributed to the excessive use of wine and opiates, to which he had become fatally addicted within the last two years—the insidious slave having, during this long interregnum of his reason, become the imperious master. He had been seen more than once in the House of Commons under this destroying influence. The failure of his mental faculties under this withering and blight of the heart, and freezing up of all that was living and genial in the spirit, was soon painfully manifest to his friends; and, at what might be called his *lucid intervals*, tormentingly so to himself—to whose proud mind, raving insanity itself appeared a lighter infliction than drivelling, maudlin imbecility.

Upon a certain night, about the middle of the Session, it had been arranged in divan, at Tilsit House, that Frankland was to open an important debate in introducing a ministerial bill. The question involved a point of international law with which he was known

to be well acquainted, and one, at the same time, which afforded scope for his poetic fire, his earnest eloquence, and the range of apt and felicitious illustration over which he held unrivalled mastery. His really friendly patron, Lord Tilsit, who now well knew both his strength and his weakness, had taken the precaution to enjoin Caroline Vane to keep her brother-in-law in proper trim, as much depended that night upon his self-possession, and the cool and entire command of all his faculties. Where so much was at stake, the *esprit de famille* of Miss Vane would, I am certain, not allow her to be negligent, and Frankland himself had a double motive to play his part well. There was responsibility and honour connected with it; and the manner in which he performed his task was to be the vindication of the minister with the public in doing a generous thing.

It had been suggested—partly, perhaps, in compassion, but, quite as likely, to gratify a colleague, and get rid of an encumbrance—that Mr. Frankland, this bill well through, should obtain a judgeship in India. Here was, at last, the prospect of ample income, sweetened to Helena and her family, by the magic title of "My Lady:"—an Indian judge is always knighted.

This night Frankland hoped might be—nay, he passionately longed that it should be—his final appearance in that arena, to figure in which had been the dream of his highest youthful ambition. The hope of long, perhaps interminable exile, from the country in which he had lately suffered so much, came to his withered spirit like the rush of waters to the parched traveller of the desert. It had already made him a new man. His dormant sympathies were awakened: his temper softened, his heart melted and overflowed. But once more he was to appear in Parliament; and, like the phœnix, he would expire in purifying and revivifying fires; and, when he had passed away, the memory of his errors might surely be forgotten, and men think of him more in sorrow than in anger.

Though he had been for months more or less under the influence of fever, he seemed in better and more tranquil spirits on this evening. He wrote me the last note I was ever to receive from him, with an order for admission into the House of Commons, and a request that I would come and hear his *last speech and confession*. I presumed, that he intended to make some apology or vindication of his public conduct. He informed me of his Indian prospects, and added a few of those touching words, which made my heart leap back to him, as the heart of a mother may cling to and yearn over her sinful, but ever beloved child.

I was afterwards informed, that while he drank coffee with his wife and her sister, he talked incessantly of India, and with somewhat of the light-heartedness of his brightest days. He took what afterwards became a memorably affectionate leave of his infant daughter; and, turning back, advised Mrs. Frankland to go early to bed as the House would sit late. He then despatched Timothy with some volumes necessary for reference in the course of his speech, and said he would follow him. Frankland had received this faithful black, at the age of ten or twelve years, as a legacy from his mother. Timothy, with his coxcombry, his broken English, his hilarity, and simple good-heartedness, was a favourite with every one, from peevish Mrs. Vane to her infant grand-daughter; and to every one he was obliging—but to his master, devoted, with what looked like the worship of an inferior nature to some protecting beneficent intelligence. No degree of caprice, or harshness of temper, in his altered master, could alienate the affection of Timothy. Mrs. Frankland might repine and complain of her husband; but Timothy could only look somewhat grave; or, if much pressed, remark that "Massa hab bery much to wex him."

Frankland was naturally too aristocratic to have endured any degree of sociality in a white servant: the tie which connected him with Timothy for so many years was more like that which attaches a man to his faithful dog, than the bond existing between a gentleman and his domestic. It implied blind fidelity and affection upon the one side, and unlimited protection upon the other.

Timothy was now well known about the purlieus of the House of Commons to the party-coloured loungers there, as Mr. Frankland's servant—"Frankland the Barrister, the famous RAT;" and the poor fellow had been subjected to taunts and insults from the Liberals of the shoulder-knot, upon his master's apostacy, which the instinct of affection alone could have led him to comprehend and conceal. Timothy had parried or endured these attacks with all the temper and patience he could muster, until this evening, when the insolent varlets so jostled and crowded him as to throw the books he carried into the mud, while they jeered him as usual with his master's dishonour. His fervid

African blood was raised to the boiling pitch, and Timothy was skirmishing all around, in a kind of general *mêlee*, blood streaming down his distorted visage, when his master came up, and in a passionate, and what the by-standers considered an imperious tone, demanded who had dared to insult his servant; at the same time, collaring and dragging forward a fellow, whom he supposed the ringleader in the assault. There was now a general rush and tumult; and the negro, blind with rage, struck out with both hands at a man dressed like a respectable mechanic, who, he blubbered, was "The dam rascal say Massa Frankland turn him coat."

The mortal pang which shot through the proud heart of Frankland may be imagined, as the crowd raised a rude laugh, and yelled back, in mockery, the words employed by the black. Insult like this must have wound to frenzy the sensitive mind of a man of proud nature, who, from childhood, had been taught to cherish a feeling of personal dignity, morbid in its delicacy and excess. His pale haughty countenance, distorted by passion, and his contemptuous and defying tone, were not suited to the humour of John Bull, who might naturally fancy himself entitled to a little fun at the expense of his own pensioner.

Though the persons nearest at hand stood off in decent respect, the yelling and hooting on the outskirts of the crowd increased, and stones were thrown, not at Timothy, but his master. Frankland had been thus baited for some minutes, before he fell into a fit from the violence of his overwrought feelings. The savages became tame on the instant; and he was carried into the nearest coffee-house. He was not long of recovering sense, and the recollection of his position and duties; and, in spite of the bold dissuasions of Timothy, the innocent cause of all this mischief, he persisted in going to the House; and, accordingly, leaning on the black, staggered out, shivering, as the poor fellow, in his affectionate jargon, afterwards informed me, as if in an ague fit.

The Speaker was already in the chair; the members were fast gathering; and Lord Tilsit's private Secretary had the satisfaction to report, by note, to his employer, then in the House of Peers, that Mr. Frankland was in his place, and sitting very quietly, as if concentrating his ideas. I was already at my post, and congratulated myself on being able to tell some of my acquaintances among the reporters, that Mr. Frankland was to redeem himself to-night.

The House was opened, the routine business despatched—and Frankland's hour was come. He seemed still buried in thought, abstracted or absent; and one of the ministerial party on the bench beside him, and acquainted with the programme of the night, hastily pushed by and whispered to him. He rose, and commenced with the customary words; but in a low and tremulous, though perfectly distinct voice; the tones of which struck on my ear, as if they were the echo of the thrilling whispers of his exquisitely modulated, oratorical speech. There was a deep hush throughout the House. He suddenly ceased. Still there was unbroken respectful silence. He attempted again and again to resume; but appeared spell-bound, or as if his faculties had suddenly deserted him. The patience, the good-breeding—let me give it the true name—the humane sympathy of his auditors with the fallen man, were, indeed, remarkable, time and place considered.

There were some muffled encouraging cheers, or rather murmurs: and the winks and whispers about his suspected condition, were, I am sure, not meant to be perceived by himself. Lord Byron has somewhere told of poor Sheridan talking of himself and his misfortunes until he at midnight would shed tears. "Perhaps he was maudlin," observes his Lordship—"and does not this make it but the more affecting?" I forget the words; but the sentiment is correct, and shows Byron to have had a more profound sensibility than I can discover in much of his most admired poetry.

In the House of Commons, there were a few men who could feel the deeper compassion for Frankland, that he was thus cast down—he who had stood so high—who had shone a light among his fellows. He sat down for, perhaps, about ten seconds, as if to recover himself. HE alone who has breathed upon man, and from the dust created the living spirit, can reckon the measure of agony which, in that brief space of time, may be sustained by the immortal essence. I was almost paralyzed myself before Frankland feebly rose and again repeated by rote the customary words—then abruptly stopped, and, after a thrilling pause, whispered, "Gentlemen, I fear I have forgot it all," and burst into an agony of tears!——

While I breathe, I shall from my soul detest the brutal ruffian, dishonouring a chivalrous name, whose vociferous laugh, preceding the words—

"Maudlin, by Jove!" set the House into a roar.

Frankland, on the instant, raised his head, drew himself up and back, and regarded the unfeeling fox-hunter with a look which no one who beheld it can ever forget.—His high spirit burst its earthy tenement: he fell forward,—and was borne away.

It was a full half hour before I could trace whither he had been carried, so that I might follow him. I was shown to a locked-up chamber at the top of a neighbouring coffee-house, across the threshold of which lay the negro, grovelling like a dog, and howling in his despair. I passed over his prostrate body into the apartment.—Upon a long table, in the centre of it, lay, stretched in his clothes —— I need tell no more.

I turned down the corner of the napkin which covered the face, and started and thrilled to behold the very lineaments of the lofty and benign countenance which had first beamed upon me in the pit of Drury Lane seven years before, and which I had never seen since then, until the present hour.

* * * *

Poetic justice! It is, indeed, the merest chimera—a mockery for rhymers and fictionists to point their tales withal. Within less than two years, Mrs. Frankland became the wife of Lord Tilsit's former secretary—a man certainly not "of genius," and one sufficiently prudent and beneficed to satisfy even the desires of Mrs. Vane. The ladies declare that Helena is more beautiful than ever, a finer woman, and a more fashionable matron. Her house is still in Berkeley Square.

As her carriage rolls past me, if in a quiet street, she will smile and kiss her hand. Once, lately, she summoned me to its steps, as it drew up opposite a shop in Bond Street; and, between the whiles that the cringing shopmen brought out their wares, to be inspected at her ease, she said many kind things, and flattering things, almost in the voice of her sister Caroline, about my friendship for Mr. Frankland. I was even affected by the rush of tears which flowed to her "violet eyes," until she sighed, "Poor Frankland and I would have been so happy, save for those wretched *pecuniary involvements!*—*Apropos*, you must call some morning, and see if we can make nothing of his masses of old papers."

There is a certain picturesque churchyard within a few miles of London, to which I, every spring, for the last five years, have made an Easter Sunday-morning pilgrimage. Among its numerous monuments and tombstones, is one plain white marble slab, which bears this simple inscription:—

JAMES CHARLES FRANKLAND, ESQ.,

BARRISTER AT LAW,

DIED ON 7TH APRIL 182–. AGED THIRTY-TWO.

THIS STONE IS ERECTED TO HIS MEMORY,

BY HIS GRATEFUL FRIEND,

JOHN GREENE.

THE SABBATH NIGHT'S SUPPER.

They misconceive the character of this northern land who imagine of its people as a cold, sullen, and ungenial race, shut up from the social charities, and incrusted with self-conceit, spiritual pride, and gloomy bigotry; but they do Scotland, and their own understandings, worse wrong, who imagine that this unsocial and austere national temper is derived from that high-hearted reformed faith which has ever allied itself with the spirit of independence, and the sternest assertion of the principles of civil liberty,—which has disdained to truckle to expediency, and braved every peril in maintaining the charter wherewith God has made man free.

The Sabbatical observances of Scotland especially, have been misrepresented and ridiculed by those who are so inconsistent in their boasted liberality as to contend that the Scotsman, by constitution a man of staid deportment and serious thought, however warm or enthusiastic his inward feelings may be, is a bigot and a fanatic, who would blot the sun from the firmament, and enshroud the face of nature with universal gloom; because he will not demonstrate his high enjoyment of the *Day of Rest* by frisking or carousing,—cricketing with the peasant of England, or capering under the green trees with the working-man of France. They will not pause to consider that, to him, the highest enjoyment of leisure, independently of religious feelings altogether, may be, "to commune with his own heart, and be still;" or, the season of public worship past, to live apart in unbroken communion with those to whom his heart is knit by the strongest ties of duty, and the sweetest claims of affection. The gay Sunday of the theatre and the Guinguette, and the more boisterous mirth

of the tea-garden and the skittle-ground, would, to many a native of Scotland, prove as joyless and burdensome on any day of the seven, as indecent and profane on the Sabbath, which he consecrates to retirement and meditation, or restricts to family intercourse and religious and intellectual exercises; regarding it as time redeemed to the self-examination and inward thought which his early moral and religious discipline have enabled him to employ aright and enjoy profoundly. Nor is it easy to say why liberal politicians and philosophers should almost force the People on modes of enjoyment, on their one day of leisure, which they would consider quite unworthy of their own higher mental cultivation and pursuits.

One Sabbath for the rich, and another for the poor — restraint upon the scanty enjoyments of the hard-toiling many, and impunity and bounty to the luxurious pleasures of the wealthy few—are at the same time so directly subversive of the plainest precepts and injunctions of that religion which recognises man's complete equality in civil rights and in moral obligation, that we have not one word to say for prohibitions that must press unequally.

These remarks detain us too long from our story, which we meant to preface by the assertion, that the types of neither the Scottish Presbyterian, nor the English Puritan, were of the austere, sullen, and cynical character which their adversaries have alleged. John Knox himself kept a cellar of good wine, and knew how to use as not abusing it. From the "Memoirs of Colonel Hutchison," and many other sources, we learn that the Puritans were, in domestic life, accomplished and enjoying, as well as learned persons. Those who insist that our national Sabbath must be gloomy, because, in despite of nature, we do not, like Grimm's German Baron, keep jumping over chairs and tables all day "to make ourselves lively," are but shallow philosophers.—One redeeming social feature even they might acknowledge in our Day of Rest, — THE SABBATH NIGHT'S SUPPER. And we trust that the venerable custom is not falling into desuetude.

The family *re-union*, and stated feast, was at first almost a necessary consequence of long journeys to distant kirks, while the population of the country was thin and scattered, and of those preposterous and interminable diets of sermonizing, which made Sunday literally a fast-day, until the evening. Then, indeed, the kitchen-fires were lighted up,—then the flesh-pots seethed and diffused a savoury steam, or the *broche* spun round in the rural *Manse*, and in all the *bien* ha'-houses in the parish, or comfortable dwellings "within burgh." At the close of his hard day's work, the reverend labourer was entitled to his social meal, of better than ordinary fare — "a feast of fat things"— hospitably shared with the chance guest, the modest young helper, or the venerable elder. Nor was there wanting, if such were the taste and temper of the reverend presider at the banquet, the zest of the clerical joke that promoted blameless hilarity and easy digestion. The manse set the custom to the parish. Now, to have insisted that the *douce* minister, with his family, or the decent farmer, with his lads and lasses, should, to show their holyday feelings, first scamper here and there all day—any way far enough from home — and then go out of doors, to frisk, like so many young *maukins*, in the moonlight, would be about as intolerant as to compel the champagne-loving Gallican to swallow, for his especial enjoyment, the smoky-flavoured Glenlivet toddy with which the Scotsman soberly crowned the banquet of the Sabbath Night.

In the family of Adam Hepburn of the Fernylees, *the Sabbath Night's Supper* had been a standing family festival for several generations. The little *quiet* bustle of preparation among the women, the better fare, the more inspirited looks, the expanding social hearts, had become a thing of inviolate custom, following the solemnities of family worship as regularly as the observance of that domestic ordinance. The venerable head of the house would then tell of the times when Cargill, and Renwick, and Rutherford, and other potent divines of the evil times, Fathers and Mighty men in Israel, burning and shining lights in a darkened land, had, when fleeing before the bloody and persecuting house of Stuart, — from whom the curse would never depart! — by their blessings and their prayers hallowed the hospitalities which they shared in this very dwelling; and that although the then inmates of Fernylees had been proscribed, and often severely mulcted, for harbouring the men of God, their substance had rather increased than diminished under this oppression, which they felt, not for themselves, but for the faithful of the land, and the afflicted Church of Scotland, tried in the furnace.

No one had ever listened with more attention to these noble tales, of doing and daring for conscience' sake, than Charles Hepburn, the youngest son of the family of Fernylees, who was born to admire with enthusiasm, but not yet to emulate, the virtues of those heroic sufferers.

The elderly female servant who superintended Adam Hepburn's household, had been more than usually provident of the creature-comforts destined to cover his board on the particular night on which our story opens. The circumstances of the family made it a time of more than ordinary tenderness and solemnity. The following morning was to witness the final breach and disruption of all that now remained to be taken away of the young props of the roof-tree of the house of Fernylees. The elder daughter, who had borne the chills of celibacy, ten years after her three sisters were married, was to leave the home of her youth to sojourn, as her old father in his prayer expressed it, in the allusion he made to her circumstances as a bride, in the tents of strangers. But it was the going forth into the evil, unknown, and dreaded world, of one who from infancy had, by his fascinations and his very errors, excited far more of fear and of hope, one over whom his father's heart yearned while his spirit travailed, that the old man dwelt, in his devotions, with a touching and simple pathos, and poured forth his feelings in that Scriptural language and imagery familiar to his lips, replied to by the low, involuntary sob of a married sister of the youth who was the object of these fervent petitions, and by the sympathetic chord touched in the staid bosom of Tibby Elliott, the above-mentioned elderly serving-woman. The contagion even spread to old Robin, the shepherd.

When the worshippers rose from their knees, and turned to the neatly-spread table, on which was already laid the apparatus for the feast, the aged father sinking in his high-backed chair, shaded his thin temples with his hand; and remained silent, as if his spirit were yet within the veil.

Charles Hepburn retired to the porch with his married sister — they were silently, hand in hand, standing, looking out upon the stars — when the ancient maid-servant appeared: — and "O Charlie, my man," was the whisper of the motherly Tibby, as drying her eyes with her apron, she passed out into the kitchen, which was in a wing of the tenement, "My man, Charlie, if ye be not a good *bairn* now." — She had gone on before Charles could reply, if he had been inclined or able to speak.

Tibby Elliott was on this night a woman cumbered with many cares. "Gie ye the *broche* a twirl, Robin," was her first cry. — "I would no like, nor you either, but to see things right and mensfu' in the Ha' House o' the Fernylees, and a son and a daughter going in the same day frae under its roof-tree.—Fetch down that bowen o' eggs, Robin; we'se have a drappit egg with the stoved eerocks, the breed o' Charlie's sprangled game hens he was so proud of langsyne, poor callant. But, oh, man! heard ye ever the auld Master sae powerfu' in intercession as this night. It's weel to be seen who lies next his heart's kernel—his motherless son! — And no other wonder; for, with all his faults — and they are neither few nor far to seek — a better-hearted youth, of the name, never crossed the door-step of the Fernylees in all its generations."

"If ye gie him a' his ain way, and keep his pouches routh o' siller," replied the shepherd, who was of the species of dry humorists not rare in Scotland in his condition.

"And what for should he no' have his ain gait, and gold in gowpens?" cried Tibby, who, by the way, was in general much less indulgent to the faults of Charles than was her friend the shepherd, who had loved him from the days of fishing with a crooked pin, and shooting with bourtree guns, though he knew, what indeed was no longer a secret, that the youth possessed a fatal facility and unsteadiness of character, already yielded to to an extent that alarmed those who loved him best, for his rectitude as much as for his worldly prosperity.

It is not uncommon to find in a large family one peculiarly gifted child, to endow whom nature seems to have robbed the others of genius, beauty, and attractiveness. Charles Hepburn, by seven years the youngest, was "the flower of the flock of Fernylees," loved, indulged, spoiled, as far as a gracious temper and a generous heart will spoil; and that, alas, was in his case far enough! He had been the caressed plaything, the petted child, the pampered school-boy of his brothers, but particularly of his younger sisters. But at the age of twenty-four, the overweening affection of his aged father alone remained unimpaired, increased, deepened by the very causes which alienated other hearts. He who had the most suffered, still loved the most. Nor to a stranger did this seem wonderful. Look in the open, genial, and handsome

countenance of Charles, and his besetting sins could not be imagined of very deep dye; spend with him a quietly social, or brightly convivial hour, and all errors or defects of character had disappeared before the charm of his manner, and were forgotten or denied to exist. Yet their undeniable existence had crushed and grieved the spirit of his venerable father, and fallen hard on the shortened means that were to sustain his old age in humble independence. Nor was Charles unaware of any part of this; and the reproaches of his elder brother, a man of quite opposite temper, or the affectionate remonstrances of his married sister, were less severe than his own frequent bitter self-upbraidings. Now he stood on the threshold of a new life. Hope was once more dawning upon him, after repeated disappointment, not the less afflictive that it was self-caused; and his sanguine, bold, and happy temper, rose to meet the new crisis.

Charles had received what is usually termed a good education. But it could not have been the wisest, for its early fruits were not soul-nurture, nor wisdom and peace. He had been highly distinguished at the University of Glasgow; and his father, who had in his own heart early devoted him to the service of the altar, secretly rejoiced in the hope of seeing him an ornament of the Church. But his natural abilities and advantages of education had not yet been improved even to any worldly purpose.

"To throw all his lear to the cocks, and leave us!" said the old shepherd, while Tibby and himself discussed the circumstances of the family and the prospects of the cadet, with the freedom assumed by all menials, and justifiable in old attached domestics:—"It is grieving."

"And would ye have had him play the hypocrite—pretend to a gift and a call to preach the Gospel—when it's ower weel kent Rob Burns' light-headed ballands aye came far readier to Charlie than the Psalms of David in metre," cried Tibby Elliott, honest indignation giving energy to her tones, as on her knees she ladled or fished up the salted goose and greens, that were to act *vis-a-vis*, to her stewed eerocks, *Anglica*, chickens.

"Houts, tuts, woman; ye are owerly strait-laced for this day o' the warld; what would have ailed Charlie to have graned away among the auld leddies till he had gotten the CALL, and the patron's *presentation* too, and a good sappy down-sitten, when, I daursay, he could have seen the wisdom o' being a wee bit twa-faced, like his neighbour ministers, and on his peremptors before folk ony way. With eighteen or twenty chalder victual stipend, a new Manse, and a piece gude glebe-land, it's no sae dooms difficult to be a douce parish minister as ye trow, Tibby. I would undertake the job myself for half the pay. Gi'e our young Chevalier a black gown and Geneva ban's, and let him alane for a year or twa to settle down, and I'll wad he's turn out a great gun o' the Gospel."

"Ye profane knave!" cried Tibby, shaking her fist in the face of her old friend, between jest and earnest: "Have ye been reading Tam Pen, [Paine] that ye speak sae lightly o' ministers! Mr. Charles, with all his backslidings, is no sae far left to himself as to lay a rash, uncalled hand on the Ark,—and the Lord will bless him for it. He is the bairn, as I can testify, o' many a secret prayer. I do not misdoubt to see him the grandest merchant in a' Liverpool yet. Sore trial as it has been to the kind, gude, auld Maister, crossed in his pride, and spulyied in his purse, to see Charles stick in the wark o' the ministry.——But redde the gait there, till I carry ben the supper."

"Ye like a' to make a sicker bargain you unco-gude folks, Tibby. A sappy foretaste here, and a ——"

"Now Robin, ye Radical, hold the scorning tongue o' ye;—would ye see the Maister scrimpit o' his Sabbath night's supper, wi' a' his bairns happy about him?"

"That would I not, lass; though I might just as weel like the auld time when rent was light, though woo' less by the stone, and when the *Man* and the *Woman* sat at the master's board-end. I wish the auld Maister no scant measure o' a' good things. May blessings be multiplied on him and his. May the upper and the nether springs be his portion! and his also, the thought of whom lies heavy on his spirit, this night!"—The old man reverently lifted the bonnet off his silvered head as he uttered these good wishes for his master, to which the friendship and daily intercourse of threescore years gave the fervour of a prayer.

In a lighter tone, Robin added, nearly as much ashamed of strong, or deep emotion, as if he had been a man of the world instead of a shepherd of the Border hills,—"We can a' take precious good care o' ourselves, Tibby; save just the auld Maister himself, and the young Chevalier. There's canny Mr. Gilbert, our auldest hope,—let number one alone to see after him. And as for *mim* Miss Mysie,

I'll wager she's thinking more this night, Sabbath though it be, of her bridal fal-als, and the blankets and sheets she can *rieve* frae the Fernylees, to her new hame, and of the hundred more pounds o' tocher she should have had, had so much not been spent on Charlie's learning, than o' the father's house, and the kindred she's leaving, and the witless, glaiket brother she is parting from."

Tibby could not dispute this affirmation. With the goose smoking on the *assiette*, between her hands, she halted to remark, that "The deadening o' natural affection, the sure sign o' the rampant growth of pride, prodigality, and the love o' filthy lucre, was among the sorest of the defections of these sinfu' times; when gear sindered the hearts nature had made the sibbest."

The time was gone by, when the *man* and the *woman* sat at the board-end of the house o' the Fernylees; but on this night of peculiar solemnity, the old respectable pair who occupied the kitchen, were invited into the parlour to drink prosperity to the departing inmates; the other servants were on the new system, lodged in bothies, save one young girl, Tibby's aide-de-camp. This invitation was made on the motion of Charles, who was himself the bearer of it, and who returned with Tibby under his arm, smirking and smoothing down her newly-donned clean apron, Robin Steele following, with his queerest, funniest face, and his broad blue bonnet, *en chapeau bras.* Cold, and half-offended, though the bride-elect might look from under her dropt eyelids, the countenance of the *auld* Maister, and even those of the married daughters of the family, brightened in welcome of this addition to the party. Robin's *Young Chevalier* diligently filled the glass of Charles's *Greysteel,**—such were their old caressing names for each other—caressing after the humorous fashion of Scottish wooing, of "nipping and scratching."

The heart of the patriarchal farmer, at the head of the board, appeared to become lighter, for the whispered, half-heard, kindly jibes, passing below the salt.

"What can I do for you, Robin, and for you too, Tibby," whispered Charles, "in yonder far-away big town?" The considerate maiden paused.

"Send her a sure account o' the state o' the Gospel in Whirlpool," whispered Robin, smiling, and winking. "And him," retorted Tibby, snelly, "be sure ye send him a *sound prent,*" (Robin's name for a Radical newspaper,) "showing how the nation is going to wrack, and the woo' rising."

"E'en let it be sae," rejoined the shepherd laughing. "That is, if it cost ye no expense. I'm not particular about the age, if the doctrine's *sound* when it comes; the Whig *prents* are grown as wersh and fuzionless as——" what we cannot tell, for the conversation swelled into a higher key, and became more general and lively. Charles was allowed to replenish the punch-bowl once; but the motion for another was promptly opposed by Tibby, and quietly overruled by the Master. And the youth, just beginning to taste "the sweet o' the night," wished Sunday had been Monday. It was, as Robin Steele afterwards sorrowfully remarked, the foundation of all his faults, that "He ne'er kenned when to stop." Long before the conviviality had reached the pitch to which Charles was attuned, the table had been cleared, and the "Big Ha' Bible" again placed upon it. Mr. Hepburn requested, on this night, that his friends should sing with him and his children, the scriptural paraphrase of the chapter which he called on his son, Charles, to read, the vision of the Patriarch, as he journeyed to Padanaram,—the covenant pillar of Bethel.

The devotional feelings of Charles Hepburn, though he had made shipwreck of his intended profession, were still as warm and excitable as his convivial sympathies. When that beautiful hymn,

"O God of Bethel,"

was sung, which so powerfully blends human charities with heavenly trust, every fibre of his frame was vibrating. Repelled by the seeming coldness of those around him, who could now, as he scornfully thought, quietly say good night, and retire to bed, he wandered out beneath the stars. The very natural thought rose as he gazed around: "What shall have occurred to me, before I look again on Fernylees, and share my dear *Father's Sabbath Night's Supper?*"

There would probably have appeared little beauty in the scene on which the moon was now rising to any one whose eyes had not, like those of Charles, first opened upon this nook of earth. The Fernylees was a rather bare, extensive pasture farm, lying on "the winter-shaded" side of a range of Border hills, near the foot of which, on a gentle ascent, stood the thatched farm-house. A few small arable fields and rushy meadows, stretched out in front and along the holm, by

* *Greysteel,* the name, few natives of Scotland need be told, given by James the Fourth, when a boy, to the Douglas. The young Pretender was called the *Chevalier.*

the side of the river, a humble stream, yet not unknown in Scottish song. Around, lay the open pastures, running up into the hills, and covered with patches of *fern*, and straggling tufts of juniper and gorse, or shelving into hollows and little glades interspersed with natural coppices of hazel, alder, and sloe-thorn. On one hand was a low range of bothies and farm-offices: on the other, about equi-distant, rose, on an airy mound, the barn-yard, exactly on the site of the old Peel-house of the Fernylees. Its massy sunken wall or bulwark was part of the original structure. Four very large ash trees had remained here, and, save one, thriven, since the times of the Border raids. On the partially blasted ash the tyrant baron of the Fernylees (which was now a fraction of a ducal domain,) had hung Judon Ker, a Border thief, whose prowess was recorded in one of Tibby Elliott's ballads. In a nest, or cradle, amid its withered branches, the boy Charles had found an out-look far up and down the valley, and a place removed from the bustle of the family, in which to con his book in quiet,—Charles, the youth, a spot "for ruminating sweet and bitter fancies," and for a repentance too seldom followed by good fruits.

He once again swung himself up into his old nestling place; and, on the eve of a new existence, cast his thoughts backwards upon his few and evil days, from the time that he had left the University. His course had been a series of errors and of failures in various attempts to obtain a living, alternating with periods of complete idleness, spent often in bitterness while lounging about his father's farm. Though Charles was but too prone to divide the blame of his misconduct with others, and to find it in any cause save the true one, it was not in a season like this, when unveiled conscience arraigned his thoughts, to listen to her solemn deliverance pronounced on his conduct, that he could deceive himself. His elder brother and sister had treated him with coldness,—had scowled upon him as the idle waster of his father's substance, which was robbery of their rights. What he called their selfishness usually raised his indignation; but his feelings were moderate at this hour, and did more justice to his just, if not very generous or cordial relatives. While this train of thought and sentiment absorbed the young man, his affairs still formed the theme of the kitchen fireside, to which the shepherd had returned to light his pipe, after suppering the steed that was to bear Charles away early in the morning to a spot traversed by the Carlisle mail, and to which his *Greysteel* was to accompany him on the pony.

"I have no brew of this sudden journey, Robin," said the thoughtful Tibby. "Ye see how ill fit that lad is to take care of himself: anither bowl on a Sabbath night! He's not fit to be trusted frae hame—his wild aits are far from being a' sown yet, or I'm sair mista'en."

"And no place fitter than the Fernylees to drap them, where I'm sure there's no want o' geese to pick them up," said Robin, in a humour between mirth and bitterness. No one foresaw the dangers of his friend Charles's character more clearly than himself; but he saw farther, and looked hopefully to the future effects of the young man's early training, and to the natural strength of his understanding yet correcting errors in whose source were mingled

> So much of Earth—so much of Heaven,
> And such impetuous blood.

The thick over-spreading branches of "Judon's ash," had for generations formed a kind of chapelry to the farm-house of Fernylees. It was the fortune of Charles Hepburn to be now, as it drew on to midnight, the involuntary listener to his gray-haired father's earnest prayers for himself. With feelings he listened, from which we withdraw in reverence, though their fountain was no deeper than the breast of a gay and very thoughtless young man.

The lingering influence of these feelings made him listen with more than ordinary patience and humility, to the final warning and lecture with which Robin and Tibby gratuitously favoured him.

"Dinna let wise Mr. Gilbert be casting ye up in our dish," said the shepherd, appealing to a species of motive, at all times too powerful with Charles.

"And oh, Charlie," wailed the privileged and now weeping maiden, "be wise now, like a dear bairn, and bring not shame upon the honest house of Fernylees; and the gray hairs o' the Maister, with sorrow to the grave."

Charles could not reply then; but seventeen miles off, and ten hours later, when he shook hands with the shepherd, as the mail came up, he said with the frank cordiality and sanguine confidence that kept the hearts his follies would have alienated: "You shall hear how steady a fellow I am growing, Robin. Don't despair of seeing me, though

going out a poor clerk, Mayor of Liverpool yet; while wise Gibby, at home yonder" — The coach-horn drowned the prognostication of the young prophet, whatever it might be, regarding his staid, industrious brother; and he mounted and was whirling over the moor, while his *Greysteel* followed him with glistening eyes.

And now two years had passed over the house of Fernylees, unmarked by any important change, save that Tibby Elliott fancied, with some truth, that her old master looked a dozen years older, and Robin Steele silently remarked the increasing difficulty with which he met the half-yearly rent-day. Frequent and various in the same period had been the shifting fortunes of Charles Hepburn; and flattering, painful, and contradictory the accounts received of and from him. Now all promised prosperity, and Robin received a half-dozen newspapers by one post; and next time it was heard, from some chance source, that Charles had again lost his employment, or had as usual abandoned it.

Wise Gilbert had married, in the meanwhile, and brought home his wife; which made Tibby prudently abdicate to avert a virtual dethronement. She retired to a small cottage, in a thriving village, some miles off, the recent creation of the wool of the adjoining hills. In a few months her "kind, gude, auld Maister," surrendering his concerns into the hands of his elder son, on a very slender annuity, to terminate with his lease, made the ancient maiden happy, by becoming her lodger, or rather the master of her cottage.

The trusty Robin Steele, who still lived at the farm, often joined their family worship on the evenings of Sundays; and so far as Tibby's means and management would stretch, the SABBATH NIGHT'S SUPPER, proscribed by the more refined manners of the modern lady of Fernylees, was not yet wholly wanting to the venerable auld Maister; nor was the health of Charles ever forgotten by Robin. If ever the father spoke of him, whom his thoughts seldom left, it was to these two humble friends that his confidings were made; his fears and hopes, and fears again. In a fit of generous, though somewhat misplaced indignation, Charles, usually a most irregular correspondent, wrote home when he learned the terms on which his father had surrendered his lease, enclosing all of his year's salary that he could realize, fifty pounds.

With what exultation did Tibby carry this intelligence to Robin, that same afternoon, as she saw him wearing the *hoggs* down the braes overhanging the village. Scarcely could he prevail with her to keep from taunting the penurious brother with the generosity of the *prodigal* son, — "Ye wot not lass," Robin said, "the hard bargain and sore strife Gilbert has with a lady wife, down-looking merkates, and the ransom rent of the Fernylees."

Tibby was a woman, and, therefore, though almost always kind, not always perfectly reasonable. "Ye'll see Charlie Hepburn bigg us a braw sclated house with a byre at the gait-end, and mak' the auld Maister walk down the town with his gold-headed cane yet," was her frequent boast; but till the accomplishment of these prophecies, which sometimes made the saint-like old man smile, he thoughtfully laid aside the greater part of the money sent him, fearing that Charles was not yet past all his expensive follies, and therefore not above want for himself. And he congratulated himself on this forethought, when, after another long silence, it was heard by accident, from a neighbouring farmer, who had been at Liverpool to sell his wool, that Charles Hepburn was married! Tibby's first impulse was indignation; but she suppressed her own feelings to spare those of her master. "We'll be sure to get a letter next week," she would say, at the spare weekly Sabbath Night's Supper, to which some old friend or neighbour often came in, uninvited but welcome. "Postage, Mr. Charles knows to be no light charge: ye are aye complaining o' the parliamenters, Robin; will ye get them to take off that post-letter cess that brings sae meikle heart-break to poor wives, widow women, and lanely mothers. But I'se warrant me Mr. Charles, now that he is a married man, with the care of a family upon his head, is another guess thing. I never saw the wise man yet that marriage did not sober and steady."

Even to such slender consolation the old father would try to smile. Of the new ties and duties Charles had taken upon himself, in a distant land, he knew nothing: but he hoped, and prayed; and his heart revived, and grew strong in its trust, when his son's next letter called upon him to send his congratulations to the gentle English girl who had preferred his Charles to wealthier suitors, and a grandsire's blessing to the new-born infant, named, in pride and fondness, by his venerated name. It had been then that

Charles, ever the man of impulse, had written home, and then, under the influence of new-born feelings, he had vowed, on the lips of his child, a future life of wisdom and firmness of purpose — a resolution kept for three long months. At the end of that time his wife requested to add a postscript to his letter home, — for Fernylees was still called home, — in which she declared herself, though cast off by her friends, for what they considered her imprudent choice, to be, as the wife of Charles, the happiest woman in England. There was that in the phrase which made the old father fear, that, short as her term of married life had been, it had not all been thus happy. And he was right. The young pair — and the wife was very young — had not been many weeks married, when Charles, by his frequently recurring inattentions and imprudencies, lost an advantageous employment. Then came a season of great hardship and privation, in which every thing failed but the affection which mutual suffering deepened between them into unutterable tenderness. Oh, well may the strongest-minded of the human race dread the subduing force of evil habit, and guard against the very appearance of evil, when Charles Hepburn, now feeling to madness the folly and cruelty of his own unsteady conduct, and pardoned times without number, could again fall into error! His final lapse was more pardonable in the immediate cause, than many of his former misadventures, though it chanced to be attended by worse consequences; for, though the least, it was the last drop in the overflowing cup.

Six months before, when sunk in the very depths of misery, shunned by his gay companions, and looking forward to the last extremity of poverty; and when, but for the sake of his wife, he would have fled to the ends of the earth to avoid or amend his fortunes, he once more found employment as an inferior clerk to an extensive company, the senior partner of which was a native of Scotland. Their business was chiefly with the United States. For some weeks the punctuality and diligence of Charles were quite exemplary. Mr. Dennistoun began to hope that the bad business character which his young countryman universally bore in Liverpool, was unfounded or exaggerated.

"Now brooms sweep clean," said the cautious Mr. William Smith, a junior partner, promoted from the quill and packing-cord, for industry and attention. He had, indeed, been very unwilling to receive the *branded* clerk, who, among other sins, was understood to have committed that of rhyme. Mr. Smith was right. The old leaven still fermented in the constitution of Hepburn; and simultaneously with the discovery of his superior intelligence in some departments of business, came the painful experience that had been forced upon all his employers. The temptations of society, pleasure, and what he called friendship, returned with unmitigated force upon their fascinated victim. Three times in the course of the twelve months he had been discharged, and restored upon promises of amendment. The last time to the tears and intercessions of his wife, — whom, as a desperate expedient, Charles had humbled himself so far as to permit to plead for him. Mr. Dennistoun pronounced his conduct "ruinous," such as he could not overlook, save for Mrs. Hepburn's sake, just this once. And could Agnes, who loved so tenderly and hoped so brightly, doubt that now her husband, restored to comfort and respectability, would be *steady* — be all that was wanting to make her, poor and unregarded as she was become, still "the happiest woman in England." Once again evil habit prevailed over the sincere but infirm resolution of Hepburn.

In the bitter cold morning of the 20th of January, 18—, the young wife of Charles Hepburn — and she was still under nineteen — sat in the single poor apartment they rented by the week, hushing her moaning child; and at the same time preparing coffee for her husband's breakfast, to be ready against the minute he would awake. She knew that he slept too long. Her eyes, heavier from a long night of watching than from tears, for of late she seldom wept, were mournfully fixed on her infant, and then a single tear stole down the cheek, thin and sunken from the "peachy bloom" once celebrated in Charles's sonnets. The snow-drift was spinning without, and the twilight was gray and dull enough that morning, in this narrow and mean street of a busy and crowded part of Liverpool.

Agnes had opened but a small part of the shutter, that her husband might obtain another half-hour's sleep after his prolonged revel The clock of a neighbouring church struck a late hour. Starting at the sound, she stole on tip-toe to the side of the bed, and gazed, through now fast-gathering tears, on the sleeper, the *dreamer* whether awake or asleep! — gently pressed her cold lips to his flushed brow, — and turned way. Soft as

her movements had been, they had awaked the restless slumberer; and she was but seated, with her child in her lap, when he tossed aside the curtain.

"You are up already, Agnes, love:—I'm afraid I kept you up very late last night too; surely you did not watch for me? But what a glorious night, Agnes! how BURNS himself would have enjoyed it;—a glorious night! a *Noctes Ambrosianæ!*"

There was no immediate reply.

"Was Burns a married man?" at last whispered the Englishwoman, whose young silvery voice was already touched with sorrow; and she leant her head on the bosom of her child.

"Married! ay, to be sure; have you forgotten 'Bonny Jean,' and the little charming song you made me teach you—'When first I went a wooing of you?'" cried the Scotsman, with some impatience of his wife's ignorance on points so familiar to himself. "You have then forgotten 'Of all the airts the wind can blaw,'" he went on, in a half-reproachful, half-playful tone.

"Oh, no, no, I have not forgotten that."

"Then, quick, Agnes dearest, get me some tea—not coffee to-day—my throat is parched, and my head aches like a hundred fiends. Fetch your son here, and I will nurse him till you get breakfast; I trust he is better today. But when did you get up, love? I hope you did not sit for me: I dare say it was two o'clock before I got home."

Agnes did not now say how much later it had been, nor yet how long she had held her solitary vigil. She placed the boy in his father's arms, and hastened to procure a small quantity of tea with her almost last shilling. While she moved about the room, Charles, still under the excitement of his revel, talked wildly of the wit, the gaiety, the national feeling, the rapturous conviviality, with which his friends and himself, men of different nations, Scottish, English, Irish, and American, united by the bond of enthusiastic admiration, had celebrated the birth-day of Scotland's immortal bard:—

And the bonds they grew tighter the more they were wet.

He repeated the flashes of Scottish genius which had electrified the banqueters, the bursts of Irish humour which had set the table in a roar. Either the fire and spirit of these sallies had totally evaporated, or Agnes was an unfit recipient. On this morning she, for the first time, could not feel with Charles, or her sympathy was feigned or faint—her smile, for she attempted to smile, forced and languid. Charles, whose sensibility was quick as ethereal fire, felt damped, disconcerted, and became silent.

The neighbouring church-clock again sullenly swung forth another hour, with the peculiar heavy sound of bells in a snow-fall.

He paused in playing with and tossing the child, whom, in whatever humour it might be, he always succeeded in making laugh,—paused to count the strokes. "Seven, eight, nine"—he started—"*ten, eleven!*" He threw down the boy, and seized his watch. It had run down amid his jollity. "Good God! is that clock true! Agnes, how thoughtless, how very thoughtless, to let me sleep so long!" Conscience checked the unjust reproach. "I could not, Charles; indeed I could not find heart to awake you while you looked so fevered and flushed,—so much to need rest."

"Foolish woman! For this your child may want bread!" He hastily dressed himself, or rather huddled on his clothes, soiled and unbrushed from his revel; while ready to faint amid the struggles of her various feelings, Agnes tremblingly held the cup of tea to his parched lips, which he but tasted, as with one look fixed upon her, in which burned love, grief, and remorse, he started away. He flew to the warehouse, where he should have been, where he had most unconditionally and indeed voluntarily promised to be, by nine o'clock; to the dock, where the New York packet had lain, in which he was that morning to have shipped a valuable consignment of expensive British shawls, which were only to arrive in Liverpool through the night. It was a duty which Mr. Dennistoun, in a fit of confidence and good-humour, had intrusted to Charles,—had specially selected him to manage, as a mark of confidence. The vessel had left the dock—she was out at sea! In a state of feeling very far from "glorious," Charles bent his steps to his place of business with shame and apprehension—not unmingled with self-condemnation—striving, in vain, to fortify himself with the reflection of how weak it was in Agnes not to have roused him earlier. True, she knew not of his important engagements; she had indeed scarce seen him for the last twenty-four hours.

The first object that met the eyes of Charles, on entering the dreaded counting-house, was Mr. Dennistoun himself, writing at the desk usually called Mr. Hepburn's. Mr. Smith was similarly employed at his

own desk; but the young gentleman partner, the capitalist, lounged over a newspaper. Every clérk was, in his own department, quill-driving as if for life and death; and nought was heard but the rustle of sharp-nibbed pens on paper. The office clock struck the half-hour past mid-day: clocks, his enemies throughout all his life, were this day to be the ruin of Charles Hepburn—living things with mocking voices, taunting his misery. He stood crushing his hat between his hands, by the side of his own desk; and, on his first attempt to speak, the eyes of all the persons present were involuntarily turned upon him, with expressions varying with the character of the spectators—all eyes, save those of Mr. Dennistoun, who never once raised his head. As there was, after five minutes waiting, no symptom of that gentleman relaxing in his writing, Charles, his brow flushing, muttered, in deep confusion, "I am quite ashamed—quite unpardonable my conduct is this morning, Sir." The old gentleman bowed coldly in assent, and continued his writing. "But the Washington has not sailed, though the John Adams has gone. I trust there is yet time."

"Spare yourself all trouble on that account, Mr. Hepburn," said the old gentleman, who could be as stately, when he so pleased, as if bred in a court, instead of a Glasgow counting-house. "The goods are shipped,—though tardily, yet in good order. That, sir, became my duty, as I had been credulous enough to believe the Ethiopian could change his skin; weak enough to assume an improper responsibility." He was still writing; and now coolly handed a slip of paper to Hepburn, who, while his eyes flashed, and then became dim, read an order to the cash-keeper to pay instantly whatever arrears of salary were due to him. That was not much, but Dennistoun, Smith, and Company, had no further occasion for his services! Charles stood at first dumb and petrified; he then attempted to speak, to remonstrate, to supplicate. He thought of Agnes and her boy, and bitter and wretched were his feelings. This dismissal was not merely loss of employment; it was the wreck of the last remains of his professional character. Who would trust any man dismissed in disgrace by the calm and liberal Dennistoun. In reply to his broken solicitation, this gentleman, now inexorable, however kind he had formerly been, without uttering a word, wrote away, merely bowing and waving his hand, in signal to the speaker to be gone. Choking with feelings of pride, of grief now chafed to anger, Hepburn abruptly left the counting-house, and the old gentleman picked up the order he had dropt, and desired the cash-keeper to pay over the money to himself. As Charles passed through the outer-room, the lounging gentleman partner called to him to pay him a compliment on his verses, recited at the festival of the preceding night, which he, an amateur of the Muses, had just finished reading, though in business hours. It wanted but this, in the present mood of the unfortunate Hepburn, to madden him outright. He ran out; he passed from street to street; his only distinct thought being by which avenue he could soonest escape from the town. In an hour he was several miles beyond money-making, many-masted Liverpool, cursing his existence, and the day that had given birth to a wretch whose life was fraught with blighting to all that loved him. An expression once wrung in anguish from his aged father, now haunted him, as one idea will cling to the brain in which reason is failing: "*Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel!*" This he muttered; shouted in his own ears; screamed out in his despair.

The long winter's day wore heavily on with the drooping and ill-boding Agnes; yet she exerted herself to amuse her child, and to prepare such food against her husband's arrival, as her slender means afforded, and such as she conceived best adapted to the state of inanition in which she knew he must return home after his revel and subsequent exhaustion. That he would not return, never once occurred to her, many as were the anxious thoughts over which she brooded. As the day wore later, Agnes became more and more uneasy. Occasionally Hepburn's impulsive zeal had detained him after the ordinary hours of business; and but too frequently he encountered, in the busy streets of Liverpool, "friends, countrymen, and lovers," all joyously met; whom he could not entertain in his own poor lodging, and accordingly adjourned with to a tavern.

In the evening, one or two of Charles's convivial companions, of the previous night, called at his lodging to fight their battles o'er again; but he was found to be abroad, and his wife, usually a very lively person, was "sullen," one young man said; and another, more candid, "in low spirits,—and no wonder." Later in the night, a porter called, belonging to the Dennistoun and Smith firm, who was from Charles's native parish, and

who felt kindly towards him, and was often helpful to him and his wife in many little matters. When informed that Mr. Hepburn had not yet come home to dinner, the man looked so blank, that the imagination of Agnes, prone of late to gloomy apprehension, caught fresh alarm, and the simple man was glad to escape from her anxious questionings. Leaving her sleeping child to the care of her landlady, Agnes walked to the extensive warehouses of Mr. Dennistoun. All was shut up in darkness, and must have been so for some hours. With difficulty she made her way home, where Hepburn had not yet appeared; and now exhausted from want of sleep and of food, and tortured by apprehension, she became so ill, that when the landlady proposed to go to the private residence of Mr. Dennistoun, to obtain intelligence of Charles, no opposition was offered.

The Liverpool merchant was in his splendid drawing-room, enjoying his well-earned evening leisure in the midst of his family, and with a small circle of friends. Among the pleasures of the evening, his favourite grand-child, a girl of thirteen or fourteen, had sung to the old Highland air to which they were appropriated, the unlucky Burns' verses of the more unfortunate Hepburn, which had been so much admired in the newspapers of the morning. Mr. Dennistoun was luckily not aware of the author of Letitia's song, or he might have listened, on this night, with impatience. The old melody, (*Arrie nam badan,*) tender at once and spirited, had been first heard by him among the hills of Argyle, more than half a century before. Whether it were in the music, the voice of the singer, or the braes and brackens, and heather-bells and long yellow broom that mingled in the song, that the spell lay, or, as was more likely, in the whole combination, we cannot tell, but the thoughts of Hepburn, which had hung upon the old Scotsman's spirits all day, returned to him more painfully than ever. Not that he repented what he had done, or of any thing save his weak forbearance, and pernicious indulgence of errors of so bad example. Yet a man may be fully acquitted by his conscience, as to the justice of a particular action, and yet be very far from comfortable in his inward feelings. So at least it was with Mr. Dennistoun, even before a message was brought up stairs that a woman was below inquiring for Mr. Charles Hepburn, one of the clerks, whose wife was dying, while he could not be heard of any where! The old gentleman became greatly agitated. His first thought was indeed terrific. Those excitable hare-brained geniuses like Hepburn, there was no saying what mad act, when in a desperate mood, abandoned of reason and of God, they might perpetrate! He recalled the appearance of the young man, the wild excitement of hilarity and the fumes of wine scarcely out of his brain, when they must have been succeeded by the fierce extremes of despair and of stinging self-reproach. Late as it was, and in spite of the remonstrances of his family, Mr. Dennistoun resolved to accompany the woman to Hepburn's lodging, and his nephew, the mercantile amateur of the Muses, attended him, to take care of him home again. The uncomfortable apartment, and its details, were of themselves full of reproach of the thoughtless and improvident habits of the owner. Agnes, recovered from the fainting fit which had so much alarmed the landlady, on the appearance of the two gentlemen, taxed her spirit to its utmost powers to learn the worst that fate had in store for her; but Dennistoun had neither heart nor nerve, nor could he think it wisdom to say more at this time, to the poor creature for whom he felt so strongly, than that he had seen Hepburn early in the day. And, in a tone of parental kindness, he added, "We are both aware, madam, that our friend Charles is not always the most punctual of men." Agnes sighed. The nephew, who, from delicacy, had not ventured farther than the door of the room, could from thence see that Hepburn's girlish-looking wife, sitting on a low stool by the side of the cradle, was the most meek, pale, Madonna-like, mournful beauty he had ever beheld. Hepburn himself was, he knew, a man of great talents, absolutely a *genius.* He felt the strongest desire in the world to have him pardoned and reinstated. Certainly it was shameful, unkind, disgraceful, to leave so sweet and beautiful a creature pining in poverty in this miserable place, while her husband was revelling, spending a guinea, or perhaps two guineas, on a single dinner.

But even the light that led astray,
Was light from Heaven!

As much from pity for Agnes, however, as from sympathy with her husband's poetical and social tastes, he ventured farther into the apartment; and to his uncle spoke something between excuse and vindication of the absent culprit. Agnes then, first looking eagerly up, her eyes swimming in grateful tears, gave him encouragement to proceed; and he urged his suit till he had fairly

exasperated the benevolent, but somewhat impatient temper of his senior, and turned against himself the very feelings on which he had relied for Hepburn's exculpation and forgiveness. He lauded the *genius* of those men—*Scotsmen*—in whom warmth and exaltation of feeling palliated aberrations unpardonable in the dull, cold-blooded, money-making mortals, who lived by square and rule. "There was," he continued in illustration, "your glorious Burns——"

"Be silent, sir!" cried the old man, in a tone of stern severity, which made Agnes start and shudder, and which at once imposed silence on the speaker. "If there be to young men of genius one warning example more impressive and solemn than another, it is that of the life and death of my noble and unfortunate countryman, ROBERT BURNS. And weak, and shallow, and false are they, who dare plead his magnified or imaginary errors in extenuation of their meaner follies. Have the weaklings any right to plead his faults, who are neither fired by his genius, elevated by his virtues, nor tortured by his passions and his pride? If Burns has left a few careless verses, which unthinking fools construe to their hurt, has he not given them hundreds of lessons of deep and purifying tenderness; of virtue in its loveliest, holiest simplicity? For one careless expression; for the record—perhaps fictitious—of one reckless carouse, may we not, from his writings, learn of thousands of times when, after a day of hard toil, he wandered away into solitude, feeling within him the first stirrings of the hidden strength, 'the gropings of the Cyclop round the walls of his cave'—his own splendid image. Do not the address to a *Field-mouse* and the *Cotter's Saturday Night*, alone, tell us of months and years of meditation on the loftiest and the tenderest themes that can exalt the thoughts of the true poet, musing on humanity—of the rapt spirit, rising 'to Him who walks upon the wings of the wind;' or, in another mood, welling up from its depths of tenderness, over the little wild flower lying crushed in his path? And what chilling years of barren toil and hopeless privation were those!—I declare, before Heaven, it were enough to make that Mighty Spirit burst its prison-house to hear a crowd of drivelling idiots charge their vices and follies upon the memory of Burns!"

The old gentleman struck his cane upon the floor with an energy that recalled his own senses to the obstreperousness of his tone, and the violence of his indignant rhapsody. An octave or two lower, he apologized to Agnes for his violence, while he acknowledged that this was a subject which always provoked him. "There is," he said, "no doubt something wrong, and in false taste in a few of the bravading verses of Burns, and in later things of the same kind from other pens, in which fools read damnation to themselves; but still nothing whatever to excuse those who thus construe them to their own hurt. Those scenes of gaiety, merriment, and extravagant conviviality, or of downright degrading sensuality, certainly never had existence, save in the brains of the writers, or the pages of a book. Shall we blame the genius of Schiller, because a few hot-headed, excitable, and weak-principled lads chose to band themselves as robbers, and take to the forests in emulation of his hero?"

"Yes," cried Agnes, impressively, "the heart-broken mothers and sisters of those misled youths well might blame him whose writings proved so perniciously seductive. Why will not genius inlist itself in a nobler cause?"

"My dear madam, this I fear often resolves itself into a simple question of commerce," said Dennistoun, smiling, "which is another category." The conversation reverted to Hepburn; and, kindly enjoining Agnes to take care of herself and her child, and to send Charles to him early in the morning, Mr. Dennistoun took his leave.

This well-meant advice could not realize itself to the extent of the benevolent man's desire. The forsaken Agnes could indeed undress herself and her child, and fold its little fevered frame to her bosom, and for its sake endeavour to take necessary sustenance; but she could not command her tortured spirit to be tranquil, nor her aching eyes to close.

The first tidings of Charles Hepburn were not obtained by Mr. Dennistoun until the fourth day, and then through a Lancaster newspaper; in which, for the humane purpose of giving information to friends, a gentleman answering the appearance of Hepburn, was described to be lying in a violent brain-fever, at a little wayside public-house. His hat and his linen bore the initials C. H., but no papers, or property of any kind, nor means of tracing him, had been found about his person, which had probably been rifled before he was discovered by a traveller passing in a gig. A man had been seen running from the spot across a field; but there was no visible injury on the person of the stranger.

The condition of his clothes showed that he must have wandered far; and probably lain in the open air, for one or more of those severe nights. It was added, that the incessant, incoherent, hoarse cry of the unfortunate man, was "*Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.*"

It was a week later, and far up on the topmost heights of the Fernylees pasture range, that Robin Steele, at all times a much greater newsmonger than his master, read the same paragraph in a Carlisle paper, and instantly left his flock; and only four more days had elapsed before the gray-headed, heart-broken father stood by the bedside of his daughter-in-law and her apparently dying infant, poisoned by the fevered maternal nutriment which should have been its life.

By the prompt care of the humane Dennistoun, Charles Hepburn had, meanwhile, received every attention needful to his condition. He was now in the house of a medical man, in Lancaster, and the strength of his constitution had already overmastered the fever. Of the more enduring and less medicable ailments of his patient, the surgeon knew, and could say nothing, save that it had done Mr. Hepburn immense good to hear that his father was in Liverpool with his wife, and that he might probably join them in a few days. But long years elapsed before that meeting took place.

It was with prospects dark enough that Charles Hepburn, commending, in the most passionate terms, his forsaken wife and his infant to the care and love of his father, and to the tenderness of Agnes the gray hairs he was, indeed, bringing to the grave with sorrow, took a pathetic leave of them both when about to enter, as a private seaman, a merchant vessel preparing for the voyage to India. His letter was dated at Bristol, where the ship was lying. "Since I cannot live by reason," he said, "I must live by rule; since I cannot be my own master, I must be the slave of another man's will. Need I say, my own Agnes, dearest! best beloved! most injured! that I go, carrying with me but one feeble hope — the hope of once again appearing before you, if conscience shall, after my long, self-prescribed period of exile and probation, say, that there is still peace on earth for the veriest wretch its surface now bears."

The rule which the unhappy man had prescribed for himself was as rigid as that of the most self-mortified anchorite. It was more severe, from being practised in the midst of society and business. His rule was not temperance, for he had never been intemperate, but total abstinence from wine. Solitude was not in his power, for he wished to be continually engaged in business; but he resolved never to employ English speech farther than was absolutely needful, nor one superfluous word in any human language. Charles Hepburn left the ship at Bombay. By his conduct he had secured the esteem and goodwill of the captain; and from this circumstance, and the proofs of his superior education and capacity, he obtained an appointment on an indigo plantation, in the Upper Provinces, where he esteemed himself fortunate in having no European associates — no society whatever, save that of the simple natives. After remaining here for two years he had money to transmit, and he ventured to write home; but these letters never reached his wife and his father. The money was never claimed. He now imagined himself strong enough to endure better the temptations of society: and he longed to be rich! Who had motives like his for gaining what an Indian would smile at as but a very paltry competence! The speechless, melancholy man became the supercargo of a private ship trading between Bengal and China. His associates — or those human beings about him, were now chiefly Lascars, for still he shunned European society. Again he had written home, but this time he sent no order for money. All he was worth was embarked in trade on his own account; and his intelligence and energy were agreeably manifested in the success of his speculations. At the end of his third voyage Hepburn hoped he was reformed! He was at least rich enough in his own estimation, for he had in his possession bills on London for £8000; and letters from Agnes and his father had waited him at Madras, beseeching him to come to them — only to come home! — to love — to happiness — to a share of the bread which by God's blessing on frugal industry, had never yet failed them — which his exertions must increase — his presence sweeten! They had complied with all his proud wishes; never had his name been mentioned by them. It was enough that in their own hearts they knew that he lived and loved them.

About noon on an October Sunday, the Carlisle mail, rolling over the same moor, but at a vastly augmented rate of speed, set down a traveller, on the exact spot, where, ten years before, Charles Hepburn had left his

Greysteel. The traveller was a handsome, grave-looking man, between thirty and forty, embrowned by the burning suns of a hot climate, and of the appearance, which, for want of a more accurate definition, is usually called military. He carried a very small portmanteau; and, as the coach drove off, proceeded on foot up the stony path, merely a bridle-way, which led winding into the hills from the wide open moor. Frequently he paused — looked round the country, or to his watch, and to the sun, which was still high. In one of these halts, he was overtaken by a young shepherd, with his dog, but in his Sunday clothes, for he was returning, as he told, from the Seceder meeting-house, which stood far off on the verge of the moor. In such circumstances, conversation was inevitable. An intelligent Scottish shepherd is not, by very many degrees, less curious than a Yankee farmer.

"An' ye have been in the Indies? — 'Od, it maun be a queer country the Indies. Was't the place where they have the breed o' sheep Robin Steele tells about, with tails sae braid that ilk ane maun have a whirlbarrow to carry the tail o't after it. Ye'll have seen Sir Pulteney and young Craigdarroch, I reckon? It's a desperate place the Indies for making siller." The stranger said he had seen the gentlemen alluded to; and added, "And Robin Steele is alive still?"

"Howt ay. — Sae ye kenned Robin? — Alive! what should ail him: — a doure, steive auld deevil, who ran wi' the souplest o' us at the last games."

"And as great a Whig as ever?" said the stranger, smiling.

"Worse," said the man, laughing to see Robin's character so well understood; "a clean Glasgow Radical.— It might cost auld Fernylees his *tack*, if the Dyeuke or the Factor were to hear the half o' Robin's nonsense — ay, and sense too, which they like far waur." The stranger held his hat before his face, while his companion eyed him keenly.

"And Robin is still at the Fernylees?"

"Ye may be sure o' that, and him in the body. How could the place do without Robin, or Robin without the place? All the three years the auld Maister lived in the village, Robin hung on about the farm; and so was there before him, to welcome him and his gude-dochter, when they went back."

"His whom?" inquired the stranger, eagerly.

"His gude-dochter—that's what the English call his daughter-in-law: — ye'll no understand our Scottish tongue. And a *good* dochter has she been to him — English and stranger to our country though she be. Yea, in truth, what Ruth the Moabitess was to ancient Naomi, and — better to him than ten sons. Mrs. Charles is, to be sure, an angel upon the yearth — sent to make up to that worthy patriarch o' the Fernylees i' the end of his day for the crossing and cumber he has had with his family, and fight with world's gear.——I'm jalousing ye have aynce kenned something o' the Fernylees folk?"

The stranger bowed in acquiescence.

"Their tale is soon told. Old Fernylees gave up the farm to Mr. Gilbert, and brought home Charles's English wife and her child, just after that good-hearted, harumscarum, ne'er-do-weel, ran off from her and his bairn to gude kens whither-and-beyont. Tibby Elliott (if ye kenned the lave, ye would ken Tibby, for she was aye the tongue o' the trump in the house of Fernylees) grudged at first a fremit woman, with a young wean, coming home to be a burden on the auld Maister's sma' means; but He who brings good out of ill, made the sight o' that young English lady even the greatest blessing ever fell on the auld Maister's gray head. With her white genty hands she wrought wi' her needle and her shears, late and early, for him and her bairn; keeping a bit school for the farmers' dochters here about: and wi' her kindness and her counsel she stayed and comforted him in all his afflictions. The hale country-side blessed her; and when, in the hinder-end of the ither year, the plea about her tocher, carried on by the great Mr. Dennistoun, the Liverpool merchant, out of his own pocket, — lose or win, — for her behoof and her bairn's, was fairly won, — conscience! ye would have thought it was the auld Dyeuke's birth-day come back, when rents were reasonable, and nae Radicals in the country-side. There was as good as five thousand pound o' it, — very convenient it came to buy back the stocking of the Fernylees, when Mr. Gilbert, seeing every year growing worse than the last in this rack-rent country, would be off to Van Diemen's Land, before the Dyeuke had gotten his last plack. Robin Steele will no let on what the new rent is; but if mercats bide up, there's bread to be made out o' the Fernylees yet, he says, if there were younger een to look after it. Yet it is just wonderful how the auld Maister, in his blindness, goes about the knowes, led by his grandson; but he has kenned the braes all his days."

"My father! My father!" exclaimed the stranger, surprised and shocked by the information of his father's blindness; and the voluble young shepherd, considerably abashed, now knew in whose presence he stood. Where his now quiet companion's road struck off, Charles shook hands, and parted from him almost in silence.

Charles suffered the shades of night to fall deep before he found courage to leave the hazel copse and approach the house, and peer over the window-curtain into the little green-walled parlour, where, in the blaze of the turf-fire, sat all that was dearest to him, the faces that had haunted him, asleep or awake, in the jungle, on the deck, or at the desk! On one side of the fire, in his old place, sat his silver-haired blind father; on the opposite seat, his Agnes; and leaning on the old man's knee, with a book — yes, that was his boy! He was now prattling to the grandsire, who spoke and smiled to Agnes; and as she returned his speech and smile, he drew his hand caressingly over the child's head, as if complying with some fond request. Charles could stand no longer. He perceived his friend Tibby, unchanged in looks, dress, or bearing, spreading the cloth on the small table, from which she had just removed the Bible, probably after family-worship, and he drew into the shade of the porch as she passed him to go to the outer kitchen, and smiled internally, yet not without a slight pang, as he heard her say, "Na, Robin, ye'll see we are just going to have anither spoiled bairn — the auld game o' the *young Chevalier* ower again. There's the auld Maister consenting that the little rogue shall sit up this night, to the Sabbath Night's Supper: but, to be sure, there's a reason for it; for the bairn repeated the fifth Command in the distinct way it would have done your heart good to hear. I maun make him a pancake."

In ten minutes afterwards the boy spoken of, panting and rosy, came flying into the kitchen, crying, "Robin, Robin shepherd! there's a grand gentleman sitting under Judon's ash, just where my grandpa' says his prayers: come and see him." They went out hand in hand.

In three minutes Robin was back — his eyes staring, his hair rising. "As I'm a living sinner, Tibby Elliott, if Charles Hepburn be in the body, he is sitting under Judon's ash,—and I have seen him!"

Tibby turned round, the frying-pan in her hand; and brandishing it about, burst into the most extraordinary screaming and eldritch laugh her old friend had ever heard, seen, or imagined. Nervous disorders and hysterics were rare at the Fernylees.

"I' the body! and what for should he no be i' the body! heich! heich! heich! Eh, sirs!" and down dropt the frying-pan; and Tibby raised her hands, wept, and sobbed, in a manner yet more frightful and *eldritch*. "As ye are a living sinner! and are na ye a living sinner? I could prove it. And what for should not Charlie Hepburn come hame, and appear in the body to his ain bairn on the very spot where his godly father has wrestled —— heich! heich! heich! ——" and she went off into another fit of hideous and wild laughter.

Robin was now almost at his wit's end. It was clear Tibby had lost her senses, so there was no time to lose with her. He had read or heard that cold water was a specific in hysterics, or vapours, or some female ailment or other; and seizing a large *cog*, that stood full on the dresser, he dashed its whole contents about her, leaving her in the middle of the kitchen like a dissolving Niobe.

When Robin went again to *Judon's ash* no one was there! — but through the same pane where Charles Hepburn had lately looked, he saw "the blithest sight had e'er been seen in the Fernylees since the auld Maister's bridal." An instinctive feeling of delicacy, which nature often denies to the peer to plant in the bosom of the shepherd-swain, told Robin that this, however, was no sight for him,—and he went back to his friend.

"It's just Charlie Hepburn, Tibby lass! come home at last, a wise man and a wealthy. Losh, woman! ye surely canna be angered at me, a feal auld friend! for twa or three draps o' clean cauld water spilt between us, meant a' for your good? Let me help ye off with your dripping duds, and busk ye quick to welcome the Young Chevalier.

If I've done ye offence, I'll make ye amends."

"I freely forgi'e ye, Robin," Tibby sobbed; "freely forgi'e ye,—ye meant weel. But this should be a Sabbath Night's Supper we ne'er saw the marrow o' in the Ha' House o' the Fernylees. And, save us, man! draw back the broche! Is this a time to scouther the single dyeuke, [duck meant this time, not Duke,] when I hae skailt in my joy the dear bairn's pancake. But ye are no caring, dear, deed are ye no!" cried the gracious Tibby, as the boy burst bounding upon them, and clasping Robin's knees, exclaimed, "That gentleman is my papa, I took him from Judon's ash to my mamma. Did you

see him, Robin? He's a braw gentleman! I have looked at him all this time. Mamma cried, but my blind papa lifted his hands and said his prayers; and my other papa said to me, 'Run now, my boy, and call my trusty fere, Robin Steele.' Let me have all my father's friends about me.'"

The "trusty fere" kept the child for some time; and then they went together to summon Tibby's old *aid*, now a decent shepherd's wife, and mistress of a neighbouring bothie.

Seated by the thrice-blest Agnes at the head of his board, the dim eyes of the venerable old man seemed on this night to beam with a heavenly lustre. "Nay, Robin, nay Tibby, ye shall sit by, and among us," he said, as the faithful old servants would on this night have withdrawn; "ye have shared days of sorrow wi' us, we will share our joy together. Sit ye down, dear friends, while we crave the Almighty's blessing on anither SABBATH NIGHT'S SUPPER."

THE COUSINS.

BY MRS. FRASER.

AMY and ALICE GRAY were brother and sister's children. Although Alice was now an orphan, in her uncle's house, she had not always dwelt in the pretty cottage of Billstane glen; and though its roses and honeysuckles were sweet and fragrant, yet when she thought of the wild thyme and heather, and the bees which hummed among them, near her mother's dwelling, she wished herself once more back at Logan House, and playing again upon the bonny Pentland hills. But the cottage in which Alice had been born was now desolate; already was the little garden overgrown with weeds, and the sheep browsed upon the few flowers which had formerly been her delight.

The mother of Alice had once been the favourite sister of John Gray, who now received her orphan daughter into his family. But there had been a coldness for many years between the brother and sister, for she had displeased him by marrying a poor, and, what he considered worse, a sickly lad, a relative of her own; and the disappointed brother consoled himself, in some measure, for this wound to his pride, by witnessing the gradual progress of the evil he had predicted from the unfortunate connexion.

Yet Mary and her husband lived happily together for several years, in spite of the threatened evils, although she could not always shut her eyes against their slow but certain approach. Her husband, though cheerful and active, was by no means strong; and his hearty laugh would often be cut short by an alarming cough, which rung like a knell on Mary's heart; or the song which he sung to his little girl would be checked by a feeling of breathlessness and pain which betrayed the lurking disease. Still, the progress of that disease was so gradual as scarcely to be remarked; and nine happy summers had little Alice played upon Logan braes, when her father one evening, returning over-heated from his work, was seized with a shivering fit, and one short week saw Mary a widow, and her child fatherless.

Poor Mary tried to shake off the cold, benumbing stupor which oppressed her brain, and clung around her heart, deadening every feeling, even that of affection for her child. In vain would she say "It is his—it is all that is left me of him: shall I not then live for its sake—shall I not be grateful?"—then clasping it to her breast, as a fresh burst of grief would shake her enfeebled frame, she blessed God when tears came to her relief, and she could weep over this sole remaining pledge of all she had lost. But Mary had loved her husband as few in her rank of life are wont to love. It is fortunate, perhaps, for the poor, that a life of perpetual care and toil leaves little room for the growth of these engrossing affections, the destruction of which is death to those who lived upon them; but the life of Mary and her husband, although spent in poverty, had been one of more ease and enjoyment than usually falls to the share of persons in such circumstances. Their dwelling was lonely and secluded,—their mutual exertions had been able to supply their few wants,—and they were all in all to each other. Their only child was a source of happy occupation to its mother, and of unceasing delight to its father. William had been reckoned a scholar among his companions, and he taught his little girl all he knew. At six years of age she could read the ballad of "Jemmy Dawson," and weep over the story of "The Babes in the

Wood;" and how proud a mother, and how happy a wife was Mary, when seated by her husband on the bank of the bonny burn of Glencorse, she listened to her little girl as, sitting on her father's knees, she read a chapter from the sacred book. No human creature besides themselves dwelt in this pleasant solitude,—the quiet sheep alone cropped the grass around them; and at such times Mary had peculiarly felt how much her husband and her child were every thing to her, and she loved him the more because for his sake she had separated herself from all the world besides. What wonder, then, was it that now, when he was lost to her for ever, her reasonings with herself, and her struggles to be resigned, were alike in vain?

Resignation, however, came at length;—but it was when she felt that she soon must follow her husband to his quiet resting-place: with melancholy pleasure would she then sit in the stillness of evening beside the simple stone which marked where he lay. It was in that deserted, but beautiful burying-ground of St. Catharines,* where I myself have often wished to lie. Quiet as it now is, it was not always a scene of peace; for near this spot was fought the battle of Rullion Green, and in this burying-ground are laid the bones of many of the old covenanters who fell there; but now its perfect repose is only interrupted by the murmurings of the wood-pigeons which roost undisturbed among the branches of one solitary tree, that overshadows the tombs of the forgotten dead. But I must not linger among those scenes so dear to my childhood, which rise up before me in all their pastoral greenness, fresh and lovely as the youthful days that were spent among them!

Here, then, let us leave the mortal remains of Mary and her husband, and follow the little orphan to her new home. An aunt of her mother's, who was the widow of a schoolmaster in the village of Pennycuick, had attended Mary in her last illness, and would willingly have received the little Alice into her house; but her uncle Gray, too late repenting his harshness to his sister, was anxious to stifle the reproaches of his own heart by affording shelter to her orphan child; and none chose to oppose this wish, for he was known to be a thriving man, and who, having but one little girl of his own, could well afford to provide for his niece. Alice thus became an inmate of Billstane cottage; and many would have thought, in its external beauties and internal plenty, she had made a happy exchange for the solitary wildness of her late abode; but the simple-hearted child could not be persuaded of this, and long pined for the freedom of her native hills, and for the looks of kindness which were wont to meet her in her father's house when she returned from rambling among them.

Her uncle Gray, content with giving her a hearty welcome to his house, and assuring her that she should want for nothing in it, took little further concern about her, but turned her over to the charge of his wife; and Mrs. Gray—as she chose to be called—a selfish, cold-hearted woman, who, by injudicious management, and still more pernicious example, was fast destroying the fine temper and amiable dispositions of her own child, only tolerated the little stranger, in the hope that she might some day or other become a useful assistant in the house, and would meantime be a playmate and attendant on her own little Amy. Amy, however, naturally frank and affectionate, received her weeping cousin with a kindness which won the little orphan's heart, and she clung to her with all the love of a sister, although constantly reminded by her aunt that they were *not* sisters,—that their situations were widely different,—and accustomed to see this difference invidiously enough marked whenever a preference could be shown.

Mild and unassuming by nature, and satisfied with the love of her cousin, poor Alice never murmured at this preference; she appeared quickly to comprehend the character of her aunt, and accommodated her conduct and feelings to her illiberal prejudices. It was only when Amy forgot herself, and gave way to petulance or selfishness, that the heart of Alice would swell, and the tears of wounded feeling fill her eyes. "Oh, they are teaching my little Amy to be cold and cruel to me, like the rest," would the poor orphan exclaim; "and what shall I then do for some one to love?" Poor child! that was the want which she felt most keenly, for to her warm and gentle heart, an object to love and cling to was as necessary as life itself. Alas! little do the gay and fortunate of mankind dream of the misery, the withering chill, which blights a fond, confiding heart, when it looks around and meets only the cold glance of indifference,—

* This lonely and beautiful burying-ground will now be sought for in vain—it has long since been covered by the waters of the Compensation Pond on the Glencorse water.

when it feels that it has no object on which to pour out its tenderness — none to which itself is dear!

Happily for Alice, her parents had early taught her on whom she ought to lean, in whom alone she might safely put her trust. Child though she was, the instruction, conveyed with an earnestness which was increased by the conviction that she soon might require to apply it, impressed her young mind with an indelible force. Her religion took its tone from her character, and was formed of simplicity, dependence, and love. On such occasions, when her heart was wounded by unkindness, she turned with confidence to it, as to an unfailing source of consolation; and fain would she have shared its consolations and its pleasures with her cousin, — fain would she have induced her to think and feel with her: but it was in vain. The youthful Amy's besetting sins were vanity and selfishness; not, indeed, that sort of selfishness which closes up the heart to the wants or the sufferings of others, — for she was lavish of her gifts, and more than commonly compassionate. But her's was the selfishness which cannot brook a rival in the love or admiration which it delights to excite. To be envied by her companions for the pretty straw hat she wore at church, or to be noticed by strangers for the lovely face which smiled beneath it, would call, indeed, a rosy blush into the cheek of Amy Gray,— but it was the blush of triumph, not of modesty; and the side-long glance which at such moments she would steal at her cousin, said as plainly as a look could speak, "Do you see that?—it is *me* they are admiring!"

"What for do you look at me sae mournfully?" said Amy, once on such an occasion, upon their return from church, as she saw the eyes of Alice fill with tears, and heard the sigh of regret which burst from her heart: "What are ye thinking of, wi' that lang face? one would think ye were gazing at auld blind Jenny, there, instead of at me."

"Well, Amy," replied her cousin, "what would ye say? would you be very angry if I were thinking it might be better maybe, for you to be as blind as poor auld Janet, than to have your een only open to this warld's vanities, when your heart should be filled with better things. See how *she* holds her Bible to her breast, as if it contained her only treasure. Oh, Amy, bonny as all the warld thinks you, God may see mair beauty in the sightless face of auld blind Janet, than either in you or in me."

"I'm sure you are as good as auld Janet, and a great deal bonnier," said Amy, laughing; "and whiles, in spite of a' my nonsense, I wish I was just like you, Alice, for then I would be far happier than I am now. But I'll try to be a gude bairn when I'm in the kirk, and I'll sit far back in the seat, and only look at our auld minister; his dour face will mak me grave enough, at least, I'se warrant;" and Amy's pious resolutions would last till she got beyond the churchyard, when the first sight of a gay bonnet, or glance of admiration from a passing stranger, would set them all afloat again; as the first wave of the advancing tide erases the sagest maxim that can be written on the smooth sand of the shore. It was, indeed, impossible for any one to associate long with the meek Alice, whose devotion seemed to flow from a heart pure as the fountain of heavenly love itself, without being in some degree influenced by the beauty of holiness; and many a vow did Amy make to emulate her cousin in piety and prudence —vows, alas! shortlived as the momentary impulse which produced them.

Thus years rolled on — and each, as it passed, brought increase to the charms of Amy Gray, whose infant beauty ripened gradually into the perfect loveliness of woman. She was the unrivalled beauty of the church of Lasswade, — the rose of Billstane glen; yet some there were who felt that there was as much to call forth love, if not admiration, in the deep blue of Alice's mild eyes, and in the varying colour which a word of kindness would call forth into her pale cheek, as in the more brilliant charms of her cousin.

One lovely summer's evening, the beauty of the weather and the scene had tempted the two girls to prolong their walk to the old chapel of Roslin; and they still lingered among its ruins, when Alice, observing a chasm in the wall, advanced to take a look at the interior of the building. An object within arrested her attention; and, after a further glance, she discovered it to be a female figure, whose tattered and fantastic dress, lit up as it was by a stream of light which fell upon her person from the aperture, left little doubt that its wearer was some unhappy creature deprived of reason. She was seated upon a gravestone, and was engaged in decking herself out with a parcel of old and various coloured rags and shreds of soiled ribbons.

The light by which she pursued this occupation becoming obscured, as Amy also stepped forward to the aperture, the maniac

exclaimed in a loud and angry voice, "Wha's that putting out Lady Roslin's lamp, and she expectin' to see company the night?"—Then observing the cousins, she added, "Hech sirs! but tha'es twa bonnie lasses!—I'se warrant ye'll be some o' the company now!—Come awa—come in then, leddies—ye're in right gude time, for her Leddyship's no risen yet—ye'll no be feared to see her in her dead claithes?—I see'd them putten on her; and whan I saw all the crimpings and the flounces, I tell't the fouk that her Leddyship was surely expectin' to see company, and I promised to come to the enterteenment."

"For God's sake, Alice, come away!" exclaimed Amy, terrified at this wild harangue,—and they were hastily turning to leave the spot, when at the moment, two young men entered the garden, laughing boisterously and loud. Alice, observing them, checked her cousin—"Let us stay where we are," said she, "or let us retire into the chapel until these noisy men pass on—they are far more to be dreaded than this poor creature. I know well who she is, Amy. I have often met her, when a child, wandering about the woods of old Woodhouselee. She is quite harmless; she calls herself Lady Bothwell, and—"

"*Calls* herself Leddy Bothwell!" exclaimed the madwoman, rising in a fury, "and wha says I'm no Leddy Bothwell?"—At this, Amy, already half alarmed, could contain herself no longer; but, darting forward towards the two young men, exclaimed in a voice of the utmost terror, "For God's sake, sir! protect us from that mad creature. She will kill us!"

"Protect you? yes, that will I, my pretty girl, as long as you please. By heavens! a perfect beauty," cried he, seizing her round the waist, "Look here, Herries! and she puts herself under my protection, too."

"Oh, no, no—let me go—let me pass," cried the now still more terrified girl; and springing from his hold with all the strength of fear, she fell almost senseless to the ground.

"For shame! Bennet," said his companion, coming forward to assist her, "what sort of conduct is this—let her alone—who are you, my girls?" added he, addressing Alice, who now, unheeding their presence, was entirely occupied in attending to her cousin.

"We are from Billstane glen, sir," replied she, raising her head modestly, but firmly; "we are the daughter and niece of Farmer Gray, to whose house we must instantly return, for they will already be uneasy at our absence; and I beg you will prevent your companion from detaining us longer." The quiet resolution of Alice's manner had all the effect she wished on the young man; he turned to his companion, who still appeared resolved to proceed with his attentions, and said, "Let these girls alone, Bennet; molest them no further—they are respectable, and I will suffer no insult to be offered them."

"*You* will not suffer! and pray, sir, by what right will you attempt to control or direct my conduct?"

"I may reply to that question at another time, perhaps," rejoined the other; "meanwhile, I repeat the injunction, and am resolved to enforce it—it will not be the part of a gentleman to press the matter further at present—afterwards I shall be quite at your service in any way you please."

"Hoh! it is thus, then," exclaimed Bennet, with a sneer; "you play the part of knight-errant protector, it appears, on this very creditable occasion. Well—be it so—another day may come. Meantime, ladies, I shall resign you to the unimpeachable protection of the honourable Charles Herries, gentleman, of no-place-at-all: but let me whisper you, that for all his reverend care of your characters, you would be fully more safe with my Lady Bothwell there, who is just as much of the lady as he is of the gentleman; and so I take my leave;" and, exchanging one furious and indignant glance with his late companion, he stalked away.

Herries permitted him to depart; and then turning to the girls, "You must permit me to see you safe home," said he, addressing himself to Alice; "your cousin requires more assistance than you can give;" and Alice saw, with increased uneasiness, that such assistance had become really needful. Amy, pale and exhausted with her terror, still trembled so much on attempting to rise, that, without a firmer support than her own, Alice saw no hope of getting her home. She was forced, therefore, to accept the offered arm of Herries, to which, indeed, Amy appeared disposed to cling far more than her more prudent cousin could have wished. But when she observed the respectful demeanour of the young man, whose gaze, though full of admiration, was expressive of neither forwardness nor familiarity, she became sincerely thankful for his timely aid, and satisfied there was no danger in accepting it. Amy herself soon recovered so far as to be able to laugh at her childish alarm; but she continued sufficiently feeble to afford an excuse for making use of her protector's arm until they reached their home.

"Preserve us a', bairns! what's come ower ye the night?" exclaimed Mrs. Gray, who appeared watching for them at the end of the little garden. "And ye're no come frae Lasswade, after a'—and me pacifying your father wi' telling him that ye wad just be doun to Lasswade, clavering wi' Jess Tod, and getting a sight of her new bannet. But wha's that ahint you? My certie, if it's no' a gentleman! —I think ye might a' had the discretion to hae telled me o' this, Alice. Winna ye please come in, sir," continued Mrs. Gray, now curtseying and coming forward; "it's maybe no a place for the like o' you, but it's nae waur in the inside than it is o' the out; and it's nae few that stops as they gang by, to spier wha's aught it—"

Alice now interposed, and stopped the career of her aunt's tongue by relating what had happened to detain them, and how much they owed to the kindness of Mr. Herries; while Amy, hearing her father's voice near the house, went to apprise him of their having brought a guest, and the reason of his being with them.

The welcome of John Gray was as frank and warm as his disposition was open and hospitable. "What for hae ye shown the gentleman into this empty room, without a spunk o' fire to welcome him?" said he to his better half. "O Meg, Meg, the brawest is aye the best wi' you; but come yere ways ben, sir, and ye'll see a bleezing ingle, and a working-man's supper,—the kitchen's a far cantier place than this."

The exchange from Mrs. Gray's little parlour to the clean and cheerful kitchen which they now entered, was no bad proof of the sense and good taste of the old farmer. The apartment, in its warmth, brightness, and perfect order, resembled rather the kitchen of a little English inn, than that of a Scottish cottage; and the white tablecloth, on which was placed a smoking dish of potatoes, accompanied by another of salt herrings, with an ample plate of fine fresh butter, betokened somewhat of the plenty and comfort, as well as the cleanliness of our more advanced neighbours. It required no great pressing to make Herries sit down and partake of such a meal, especially when he saw Amy preparing to take the seat opposite him.

"Amy, my bairn, ask a blessing," said the old man; and Amy, closing her lovely eyes, and raising her hands, pronounced the simple prayer of thanksgiving, in a voice so soft and sweet, even in its Scottish accent, that Herries felt it thrill through every vein. He remained standing after the others were seated, with eyes intently fixed on the beautiful creature before him, until her deep blushes at last recalled him to himself. But Herries was not a youth to be embarrassed by the blushes of a country girl. He soon recovered his recollection, and joined in the conversation, which the old man promoted. His gaiety and good humour disposed him to be easily pleased with those around him, and not less so with himself. Particular circumstances had led him to suppose that he was by birth superior in rank to the society into which he had early been thrown; and however much disposed to enjoy the frolic and fun of his companions for the time, his ambition had hitherto been rather to add in every way to his consequence, than to diminish it by any low connexion; still, upon the present occasion, the fascinations of the rustic beauty, and the frank hospitality of the honest farmer, overpowered the whisperings of pride, and he willingly gave himself up to the enjoyment of the passing hour.

"Aweel, Mr. Herries," said the old man at parting, "ye'll maybe gie us a ca' on the Saturdays, whan ye'll be this way on ony o' your fishing ploys. The college will haud a grip o' ye through the week; but I've seen the professors themselves as glad as the callants whan Saturday cam' round, and just as keen o' a ploy to Habbie's How, or Roslin."

Herries readily promised to see his friends at Billstane cottage, ere long; and they parted mutually well pleased with each other's acquaintance. As the young man walked up the quiet, beautiful glen, he could not help thinking how little might suffice for happiness with so lovely a girl as Amy Gray for a partner: when he laid his head upon the pillow, her image, as she clung to him in terror, still haunted his dreams; nor was the business and bustle of the succeeding day sufficient to banish it from his waking thoughts.

Next morning, as the family were assembled at breakfast, they were surprised by the sight of *Cuddy Willie*, the only Post, express, and messenger of the town of Lasswade, who made his appearance with a letter in his hand. What idea it might be that darted through Amy's mind on this occasion, and spread her cheeks and neck all over with a crimson blush, or how far her busy fancy might connect the arrival of this letter with the events of the preceding evening, it would be unfair to conjecture; but it is certain that

she was the first to start up and stretch forth her hand to receive it.

"Deil's in the lassie, does she think that nane maun hae a letter but hersel," said Willie. "I'se warrant, now, ye thought it was frae ye're jo; but na na, it's no for you: this is nae whilly-wha o' a love letter; it was no flory chap that wrote the like o' this —See, John Gray; here, man; the letter's for you, and it's the Pennycuick post-mark that's on it."

Farmer Gray opened the letter, which had indeed little resemblance to a love epistle, and found its contents to be as follow:

"This comes to inform ye, John Gray, that ye're gude-sister, Marion Brown, was not expected, this morning whan I left the Haugh. She's been taen wi' a sair dwam, by ordinar. Widow Grindly says how it's only the heart-ague; but I impeach the goudy-aumous she gaed to this day was a fortnight, at Pennycuick. The Collier bodies killed a bit lamb that was deeing o' the bats, and made a '*loup in the kettle*' wi' it; your gude sister was invited, and I'se warrant she had her share, for she was nae hersel' the next mornin; and I canna but jalouse the meat, for it was no natral. But howsomever, she's aye speering for Alice Gray, and what for she's no coming till her; and indeed it's nae mair than naturality might expect, that her ain niece wad come to tend her, and no leave her to fremed folk; so if Alice looks to see her Aunty in the body, she'll come aff as sune as she gets this,

"Yours to command,
"John Gourlay."

"Well, Alice," said her uncle, "will ye be for going to your Aunty's? she's a lone woman, and I'm thinking there will be mair fash than comfort in ony attendance the niebours can gie."

"Surely, uncle, I will go," said Alice; "and the sooner the better. Peddie's carts are going to Pennycuick the day, and they can put me down at the Haugh. It's naething o' a walk frae this, but they'll take my trunk wi' me." So with Peddie's carts did Alice go accordingly, and was set down at the opening of a little glen, which led to the Haugh in which her aunt's cottage stood.

Alice listened for a moment at the door before she had courage to lift the latch; but hearing the voice of some one reading aloud, she felt assured that things were better than she had looked for. The gentle tap of Alice at the door was answered by a request to come in, and she was relieved by finding her aunt in bed indeed, but still able to speak to her, and to thank her for coming so readily to nurse her. "Alice, my bairn," said she, "I have wearied sair for you, and now I have got baith my blessings at ance. Little did I think, when I heard the chap at the door last night, and said to mysel, wha's that coming to fash me now? that it was my bonny Willie Douglas, come to see his auld schule-mistress in her distress: but he was aye the kindest hearted callant, as weel as the best. And now, Willie, my man, ye'll get a sound sleep the night; for he watched me a' last night, Alice, after he had putten out Widow Hislop and Widow Grindly; for, troth, their tongues were like to drive me demented. But ye'll gang but the house the night, Willie, and sleep in the ither bed, and my bonny Alice will lie down in that ane, and be near me whenever I stir."

"Yes, yes, mother. I'll do whatever ye bid me," replied William; "but ye maunna speak ony mair, for your een are as bright as candles, and the Doctor says, there is owre muckle fever about you already."

There was indeed too much fever about the poor woman; she passed a restless night, and when the Doctor saw her in the morning, he told Alice, that he feared her aunt had not strength to combat long against the violence of the disease. She continued to linger for a fortnight, gradually sinking; at times collected, and aware of all around her, but at other moments wandering; and towards night, as the fever increased, the aid of William Douglas was sometimes required to manage and constrain her. Often did Alice think how helpless she should have found herself without such aid, and this kind and judicious assistance became every hour more valuable to her; while William, as he witnessed her tender care, her gentleness and unwearying patience, her piety and affection, could not but feel inwardly what a treasure she would prove to the man who could win her heart.

It was on the morning of the fourteenth day, that Alice observed a change in her aunt's appearance, so obvious, that she felt the hour which was to part them for ever could not be far distant. She pointed out to William the sunken eye, the shrunk and fallen features, and saw her fears confirmed in his expression. The two young creatures sat down in silence beside the bed of sickness and of death, and watched the heavy breath-

ing of the sufferer. She still appeared to know them, and after a pause of some minutes, during which they thought she slept, she opened her eyes, and looking at Douglas, faintly articulated, "God's word!" William took the Bible, and read to her the 14th chapter of St. John. She listened with apparent intelligence and pleasure; "God bless my boy," said she, "he was aye my best scholar; aye at the head o' the class; but Willie, my dear, dismiss the school now—I'm no able for their young tongues; I maun hae peace."

"The peace of God be yours!" said Alice, in a low voice.

"It is, it is, my bairn," uttered the dying woman faintly, and again she sunk into a short slumber.

At this moment, Alice thought she heard a gentle tap at the door, and while she beckoned to Douglas to open it, felt persuaded that she heard the voice of her cousin. It was indeed her own Amy, who had come to see how all went with Alice. Alice kissed her in silence, while the large drops stood in her eyes as she pointed to the bed where her aunt lay; and Amy, with deep emotion, laid aside her bonnet and cloak, and sat down beside her cousin; while Douglas stood looking alternately at the two lovely girls, and then at the bed of death, and felt how striking was the contrast. The beauty and bloom of Amy, seemed such as death could never touch: that glow of warmth, and life, and health—could it ever change into a form so appalling as that before him? there was something almost revolting in the thought. Hastily withdrawing his eyes, they fell upon the sweet pale face of Alice, so gentle in its sorrow, that she seemed like the link between heaven and earth; he felt it as balm to his troubled soul, and dwelt with unmixed delight upon her meek and pensive countenance.

"Did you come alone, Amy?" inquired Alice; "I'm sure your mother would not like that!"

Amy coloured like scarlet, while she replied, "No, Charles Herries walked part of the way wi' me."

"Charles Herries!" repeated Alice in a tone of surprise.

"Charles Herries!" echoed the voice of the dying woman, starting up in her bed; "whare is he? Oh, Willie, dinna let him in—dinna let him come here. I never had but trouble wi' that young man; and dinna tak up wi' Charles Herries, Alice—he's no what he seems to be. Surely his father—oh if I had breath to tell ye—" But it was in vain—the increase of agitation only hastened the closing scene; that fearful noise, the last which issues from the dying, choaked her words, and told that the spirit was separating from the body, that the last struggle was over; and Marion Brown sunk back upon the pillow a lifeless corpse. In vain did Douglas and Alice exhaust their efforts to recall the feeble spark—it had fled for ever!

Amy exerted herself to restrain her own terror, that she might soothe and comfort her afflicted cousin; and it was not until the evening was far advanced, that the necessity of her return home, forced itself upon their consideration.

"You cannot go alone, Amy; William Douglas will see you home."

"And leave you alone at such a time, and in such circumstances?" returned Amy.

"I am not alone, dear Amy—I have all I ought to want, or trust to, at such a moment—my God and my Bible. Remember how frightened you were at Roslin, Amy. I cannot think of your going home alone."

Amy urged her refusal no farther; but, kissing her cousin, promised to send Douglas back as soon as she got in sight of Loanhead, and quitted the cottage.

Left to herself, Alice knelt down by the bed, where lay the mortal remains of her aunt, and poured out her soul in prayer. She felt soothed and strengthened as she called upon her Saviour, and put herself under the sole protection of her God. The evening was soft and lovely; the last rays of the sun, though they no longer penetrated into the glen, still glowed on the distant Pentlands, and edged the clouds with purple and gold. Alice softly opened the latticed window, and pulling some pieces of the sweetbriar and honeysuckle, which had been the pride of her aunt, strewed them upon the bed of death. The evening air refreshed her; and, taking her Bible, she sat by the open window, and read until the light forsook her. It was now that her thoughts became busy, and not unmingled with terror: the last broken expressions of her aunt dwelt fearfully on her memory. It appeared from them that she had known Herries, and considered him with no favourable eye: the effort to which expiring nature had been roused, must have originated in some very powerful feeling. Death had stopped the intended communication; but Alice felt that enough had been uttered to give reasonable grounds of suspicion; and that the earnest warning of the dead, was to

be regarded as of the most solemn importance. Her imagination would then conjure up the tales she had heard of spirits, after death, returning to disburden themselves of painful secrets; and she did not now dare to turn her eyes towards the bed where the body lay, lest she might see it arise and beckon her. What would she now have given for the presence of William Douglas!—but the thought revived her weakened reason, "Shall I wish for the presence of a creature like myself, and forget that He who made us is near me? Forgive me, O God! I will shake off these childish, these impious terrors, and trust in thee!" And rousing herself, she went towards the fire, stirred it up, and lighting the lamp, sat down once more to read her Bible.

She had not been many minutes thus employed, when she was startled by a noise, as of some one pushing open the casemented window; and turning round, what was her horror to see a pale and haggard countenance gazing in upon her! Sick with affright, her senses reeled, and for a while she could distinguish nothing further; but, recovering after a few moments, she recognized the wild features, and fantastic garments of the wretched maniac who had terrified her cousin and herself at Roslin Chapel.

"Alice Gray!" said the crazy creature, "open the door this moment; I maun speak wi' yere aunty. I ken she's in the dead-thraw; but she canna win awa' wi' that on her mind which I wot o'."

"Oh, for the love of Heaven, leave this place," exclaimed Alice; "Marion Brown is dead."

"Dead!" echoed the maniac, raising her voice to a fearful pitch; "Dinna tell me she's dead: but if she were dead and streekit —ay, if she were in her grave—she maun keep tryst and promise wi' me. Speak to me, Marion Brown; as you hope for the grace of Heaven, tell me whare is my bairn, my bonny bairn! Oh, I never knew trouble till they took him frae me! he lay in my bosom, and keepit my heart aye warm; and now it's cauld as the snaw on Tintock, and my head's burning like the pit o' Tophet:—but open the door, Alice Gray, or I'll gar it flee in as mony splinters as wad make spunks to the deevil for a twalmonth."

"Now God help me in this strait!" exclaimed the terrified girl, raising her clasped hands in earnest supplication to Heaven; "how shall I pacify this fearful woman?" and she sprung from her seat, scarcely conscious of what she did; for at this moment the maniac, enraged by the delay, lent her whole strength to break down the frail barrier which opposed itself to her fury. Alice felt that the next moment must place her in the power of the mad creature; yet she thought less of herself than of shielding the remains of her aunt from such sacrilegeous violence; and clinging to the bed, she listened in breathless horror as the door shook on its hinges at every blow—a violent crash told her that it had given way; she heard no more, but sunk insensible upon the body of the dead.

When Alice awoke to consciousness, her opening eyes met those of William Douglas, anxiously fixed upon her; but it was some time ere she could recall the fearful scene which had deprived her of sense. She was now lying upon a bed in the adjoining room, and one of their female neighbours was sitting by her. "Oh, William! when did you come? who is in the next room? is that dreadful woman gone?" asked Alice, as all that had passed began to dawn upon her memory.

"Yes, dear Alice, she is gone; she never was in that room—I came up just as she had burst open the door. John Mortcloth, the kirk beadle, and Phemy there, were with me; and you know she is feared for the beadle; so she set off for Pennycuick the moment she saw him, and John will take care to have her confined, at all events till the burial is over. But ye maun go to bed now, Alice, and get a good night's rest, or we'll hae the Doctor wi' you next: Phemy there will sleep by you, and I'll watch mysel' in the next room; so naething need fear ye: and your uncle and Amy's to be here the morn."

Rest was, in truth, most necessary for Alice, who was so much worn out, that she soon sunk to sleep; and was so much refreshed by it, that she rose the next morning able to meet her uncle and cousin with composure. They all remained at the Haugh until after the funeral, at which William Douglas carried the head of his old schoolmistress to the grave. She had not forgotten her favourite scholar in the disposal of her few worldly goods: the small selection of books, which she denominated her husband's *library*, were bestowed upon William, while Alice was left sole heiress of all the other goods and chattels, half-made webs, and few odd pounds, which the widow died possessed of.

The party now returned to Billstane glen, and here William Douglas was obliged to take leave of his friends, and return to his

usual occupations. He was assistant gardener to a baronet's family near the town of Pennycuick, and too clever a hand to be spared longer than was necessary. He shook hands with Amy and her father, and promised soon to see them at Billstane glen; but when he turned to Alice, he could not utter a word, —he only took her hand, and held it, as if he would have kept it for ever. As Alice gently withdrew it, the tears stood in her eyes, and William felt that had there been fewer witnesses, their parting might have been different.

A fortnight had nearly passed since the return of Alice, and the cousins had resumed their former course of life, when Alice began to remark that the innocent gaiety which the fine spirits of Amy used to spread over their hours of mutual occupation, had quite disappeared. She observed that her cousin would start at the slightest noise from without. If a dog barked, the colour would rise to her cheek, and her eager eyes seemed ever on the look out, as if she sought for some one; the next moment would show disappointment painted in every feature. The thought of Herries, and his evident admiration of Amy, recurred to the mind of Alice, and she speedily became impressed with the fear that he, in some shape or other, was the cause of so marked a change. Filled with alarm, she resolved to mention to her uncle the words which her aunt had dropt concerning that young man: but the occurrence of the next day rendered her doubtful as to the justness of her suspicions, and uncertain whether Herries was really the object of Amy's preference.

The family were just preparing to seat themselves at their two o'clock dinner, when the smart crack of a whip drew the bustling Mrs. Gray to the window, and thrusting out as much of her person as its dimensions would admit, she exclaimed, "Preserve us a'! it's Mr. Herries; and he's mounted on a fine horse. Here, John, man! ye maun rise and tak a haud o't—ye'll hae to gang ower to Pedlie's wi' it." A glance which Alice could not help stealing at her cousin, discovered to her the colour rising like crimson in her cheeks; but it resembled rather the flush of resentment than that of pleasure, as she turned to her mother, saying, "Troth, mother, ye've little to do, sending my father on sic an errand. If Mr. Herries kens his place nae better than to come galloping on fine horses to poor folks' houses, I think my father should ken his better than to act as his servant."

"Nonsense, lassie—what's that ye're saying?—is nae Mr. Herries a gentleman?"

"I ken nae, and I care nae what Mr. Herries may be," said Amy; "I'm sure we hae seen little o' him of late, and I'm thinking ——" but here Amy's eloquence was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Herries himself. He did not, however, come alone, for William Douglas entered the room at the same moment. Amy, who had turned away as if to avoid being the first to speak to Herries, now rose, and holding out her hand to Douglas, welcomed him in the kindest manner; then turning to Herries, she observed, with a slight toss of her head, "Bless me, Mr. Herries, is this you?—ye're a sight for sair e'en; and mine are sae blind, I did nae see ye."

Herries coloured, but replied with a laugh, "Then we must have a consultation, Amy. You know I'm to be a doctor,—I must examine them."

"I thank you, sir," said Amy, rather scornfully; "but we're weel enough off in the country here for doctor's attendance;—your Edinbro' folk are no sae muckle to be depended on; there's ower lang atween their visits—it tempts a body to look other gaits." So saying, Amy turned to William Douglas, and helping him to the best of all that was before her, she chatted and laughed with him during the whole time of dinner.

Alice was bewildered. Could it be William Douglas, after all, that her cousin preferred? The bare possibility of this sent a pang through her heart;—yet, was he not a worthy, an excellent young man? and, had she not dreaded her cousin's apparent attachment to Herries? Had she not even resolved to inform her uncle of the cause which she had for this alarm? What, then, could account for the pain she experienced at a discovery which could only redound to the advantage of that cousin whom she loved so much? She more than once asked herself this question; yet the task of self-examination was so painful, that she could not force herself to perform it rigidly.

Alice passed a miserable day. How different from what she had expected, in again meeting with Douglas! She did think that once or twice he had tried to disengage himself from her cousin, and turn to her; and more than once their eyes had met as his were fixed upon her with affection; but Alice felt that she herself had been so preoccupied and miserable, that her very look might have chilled his advances. And in

truth such was the case, for William left the cottage at night, disappointed and unhappy at the behaviour of Alice, so different from her former frank and open manner, and resolved to know more of her heart, before he should permit his own to dwell so exclusively upon her. How Amy and Herries had parted, Alice had not seen; but that night Amy was in better spirits, and talked gayly with her cousin, although she avoided all mention of the name of Herries. Alice would fain have introduced the subject when they retired for the night, and have inquired directly of her cousin what were in truth her sentiments with regard to Herries; but she met with no encouragement, and the doubts which she now entertained respecting the situation of Douglas's affections, were so painful, that she was but little inclined to press a conversation that might have touched on so tender a point.

Matters had continued thus for some days when Alice returning home one afternoon from Lasswade, observed a boy standing with a horse at the end of a little lane which leads down to the river. Thinking that she recognised it as the same which Herries had ridden when last at the cottage, she inquired of the boy, whether the horse did not belong to a gentleman of that name.

"I ken nae if he be a Mr. Herries or no," said the boy; "but it's a gentleman I have seen afore now at our public, and he trysted me to wait him here wi' his horse at twa o'clock. I'm thinking he's gaen doun the water, for he had his fishing wand wi' him." On hearing this Alice hastened home, but found there only her aunt; "Where is Amy? where is my cousin?" asked she with some anxiety.

"What's the lassie in sic a fluster about?" returned her aunt; "Amy's doun at Kevock Mill, looking after Mrs. Peddie's bees: she said how Mrs. Peddie wanted her, for a' her ain lassies were thrang washing; so Amy took her seam wi' her, and gaed awa about an hour syne."

The alarm of Alice was in no degree abated by this account of the matter,—she hurried from her aunt, and sought her cousin in Mrs. Peddie's garden. There she was not; but her work was lying on the grass, and she was convinced that its owner could not be far distant. She turned to the water side, and after straining her eyes as far as she could see in search of her cousin, was just turning away to make farther inquiry at the mill, when she caught a glimpse of a woman's shawl. A group of trees intervened between her and this object; but shifting her position, and climbing up the bank, she distinctly saw Amy in conversation with a person whom she could not for a moment doubt to be Herries. In the next instant the gentleman crossed the fence, and disappeared so quickly that Alice thought she must have been observed; while Amy advanced alone by the path near the water side.

Alice now hastened to join her cousin, and coming up with her, put at once the question, if it was Mr. Herries from whom she had just parted?

"Maybe it was, and maybe it wasna," replied Amy, pettishly; "but ye needna fash yoursel' wi' what disna concern you, Alice. Ye didna see me herding after you this gait, whan you and Willie Douglas were sae thick at the Haugh thegither."

"Oh, Amy, dinna speak sae unkindly to me," replied her cousin. "Ye ken weel if it was the like of Willie Douglas that was after ye, I wadna think o' watching you this gait. Oh remember my aunt's dying words about Charles Herries; he's no to be trusted, Amy. He's a gentleman out of your station entirely: he can never mak you his wife—and surely—"

"And surely I'll never be his mistress," returned Amy. "I'm muckle obliged to ye for yer good opinion, Alice; but if there's no much to trust to in my honesty, ye might have trusted something to my pride: but keep your mind easy, cousin; for ye may live to see me Willie Douglas's wife, but never Charles Herries's madam."

Cut to the heart by her cousin's unkindness, Alice turned from her in silence, and went home to her work. But as Amy seemed resolved against confiding in her, she on her part determined to acquaint her uncle with all that had passed, that he might watch over his daughter's safety; and, accordingly, she took the first opportunity of doing so. Her uncle thanked her, kindly observing, "Weel, Alice, ye hae acted like a good and prudent lassie in telling me a' this; for I was just saying as muckle to her mother, and telling her that I never seed ony gude come o' gentlemen gallivanting after puir folk: but her mother's a fule, ye ken, and thinks naething's ower gude for her bairn. But troth, Alice, I was looking gey gleg after the lassie the tither day, whan thae twa chaps cam here, and I couldna help thinking it was Willie Douglas she was maist ta'en up about; and I'm sure if it was sae, I wad never

thwart her; for, though Willie's no far ben in the warld yet, and has naething laid to the fore, I hae plenty, and he's ane that will rise, or I'm mistaen; for he's a clever chap, and wad mak a kind husband to my bairn. But ye'll say naething o' this to yer aunty—it's nonsense raising the stour to blind our ain een; but look weel to my bairn, Alice; and if she's thinking o' Willie Douglas, ye can tee the ba' till her, and keep that flory chap Herries out o' her gait: and I'll hae a crack wi' Willie; he's no want my countenance, though he may hae naething o' his ain to the fore yet."

Poor Alice! what a task had her uncle unconsciously imposed on her! to sacrifice her own happiness without even the certainty of promoting that of her cousin; nor could she avoid asking herself how far it might even be her duty to do so. Yet how could she hesitate to watch over Amy, and save her at all risks from the seductions of Herries? In this, her heart told her that she could not err. "Amy must be saved," said she to herself, "cost what it may, even should my own happiness be the price;" and too soon had she reason to believe that duty and friendship required no less a sacrifice.

William Douglas continued his visits at the cottage, and observed with increasing perplexity and pain, that, while Amy received him with kindness and good humour, Alice, unhappy and preoccupied herself, kept aloof, and at times appeared even to bestow more of her attention upon Herries than on him. He watched her eye, as it followed the movements of Herries, with disquiet and jealousy; and, during their walks, if William attempted to linger behind with her, or sought to engross that attention which she once so readily yielded him, he saw that she became restless until an opportunity occurred for quickening her pace and joining her cousin. The affectionate but proud heart of Douglas could not long endure this change of conduct in one who had once regarded him so differently; and, after some ineffectual efforts to regain his former footing in the good graces of Alice, he at length sought to soothe his irritated feelings with the gaiety and good humour of her cousin's society, and in this he met with every encouragement, from the father at least.

The first sensations of Douglas were only those of gratitude for the kindness shown to him; but, after a while, flattered by the attention of Amy, he became more sensible to her beauty, and yielded to it, at length, a degree of admiration, which, however different from the devotion of true affection, was sufficient to deceive both himself and others. Alice could not but perceive this, and felt it with a bitterness which she could not always conceal. One evening when William, more than usually elevated by the father's kindness, and the obvious encouragement of the daughter, appeared, in his devotion to his new mistress, to have forgotten even the presence of the meek, but neglected Alice, the poor girl, unable to endure the pain of slighted and insulted affection, sought her own room, to give vent to the anguish she could no longer conceal. Her retreat was remarked by Amy, whose eye had discovered her distress, and too well guessed the cause. Struck with a pang of remorse, she waited but till Douglas had gone, when she sought her cousin with the intention of making her peace with her. But Amy was too conscious of her own inexcusable conduct, to be in very good humour with herself or any one else; and she opened the door of her room scarce knowing what to say. Alice, who had thrown herself upon her bed, to weep without control, now started from it and endeavoured to conceal her tears.

"What is the matter, Alice?" inquired Amy, looking earnestly at her pale face and swollen eyes.

"Oh nothing, Amy—leave me—leave me," returned the weeping girl.

"I canna leave ye till ye tell me what ails ye, for I'm sure, Alice, I dinna ken what ye wad be at. First ye was ill pleased when ye thought me ta'en up wi' Charles Herries, and now yer worse vexed when ye think it's Willie Douglas. I'm sure I dinna ken how to please you, or what will mak you happy."

"Ye can never mak me happy again, Amy; but oh! if I only thought that in spoiling my happiness ye had made sure o' your ain, and that of the poor lad who thinks ye love him, I wad be content; but I fear—I fear—"

"Weel, weel, dear Alice, dinna vex yersel sae; for if I canna content ye that way, I maybe may anither, and a' may rin right yet, I hope. Mony a mair broken boat than I've to row, has come to land; but it maun a' be left to my ain guiding—"

"May Heaven guide you right!" exclaimed Alice; "but oh! remember ye scarce can expect that, if ye lead others wrang—"

"Weel, weel, lassie, I'll try and be a better bairn; so kiss me, Alice, and say we're friends again." The kiss which Alice

gave her cousin was a true pledge that not one feeling of resentment remained in her guileless breast; and kneeling down in her little apartment, she commended herself, as well as the thoughtless Amy, to that God, who is able to bring good out of seeming evil, and shed a light over the darkest way.

Some weeks elapsed after this conversation between the cousins, during the greater part of which time Alice was confined to the house by a severe sprain in her ankle; an accident which she the more regretted, as it was the means of removing from Amy the wholesome restraint of her constant presence; and she grieved to observe that her thoughtless cousin was but too willing to take advantage of this unfortunate liberty. Her frequent absences were not unmarked by Alice; and she tried, though with but little success, to awaken her aunt's attention to this subject.

"Dear sirs," said Mrs. Gray, on one of these occasions, "what needs ye be making sic a speakulation about the lassie diverting hersel a wee? I'm sure I'm thankfu' to see her ta'en up wi' ony kind o' nonsense; for she's been dowie enough o' late. And what is it, after a'? she's only gaen doun to Jess Tod's to buy ribbons, to help to busk hersel for the dance at John Thamson's kirn the night."

"Oh, aunt," said Alice, earnestly, "yer surely no going to let Amy gang to the kirn the night; and her father no at hame, and me laid up here, and nane to look after her!"

"Nane to look after her! My certie," exclaimed the indignant Mrs. Gray, "things are come to a bonny pass, whan a mither's no' thought fit to look after her ain bairn. But I never kenned muckle gude come o' sae muckle herding. Young folk maun be young folk; and it's nonsense to look for auld heads on young shouthers. I dinna want to see my bairn setting up there as mim as a May puddock; it's just enough to hae ane in the house to preach to them that's aulder nor hersel."

Alice saw it was in vain to insist further; but she earnestly hoped that her uncle might return before her aunt expected him; but in this she was doomed to be disappointed. The evening came, and her aunt and Amy set out for Lasswade, to join the party at John Thompson's kirn, whilst Alice was left to wonder at her own apprehensions, and to count the hours till their return. Ten o'clock at length came; and with joy she heard the bark of old Jowler in the garden, and her aunt's voice soothing him as she came into the house.

"But where is Amy?" inquired Alice, on seeing her aunt enter alone, "where is my cousin?"

"Whare would she be," returned her aunt, "but just skipping like a mawkin on John Thamson's floor! Troth, I hadna the heart to bring the creature hame sae sune in the night; and my een were gathering straes, this hour past, wi' being sae sune up in the morning, so I behoved to come hame mysel."

"But, dear aunt, could ye leave Amy to come hame in the dark, and sae late at night, and you no wi' her?"

"She's no' coming hame in the dark; ye think naebody has a mouthfu' of sense but yersel, Alice; but Amy promised me to sleep a' night at Jess Tod's, and to be up here in gude time in the morning: sae gang to yer bed, lassie, and dinna be clavering there a' night about naething." Alice did go to bed; and, after some hours of restless anxiety, at last she fell asleep.

The low sun of an October morning was still struggling through the mist which hung in light wreaths above the Swallow brae, and partly hid and partly showed the beautiful woods of Mavis bank, bright in their autumnal dress, when Farmer Gray, mounted on his shaggy pony, came trotting down the glen of Billstane burn. He was now near his home; and his heart warmed at the thoughts of eating his comfortable meal at his own fireside, surrounded by his family. "Truly my lot has fallen in pleasant places," said the good man to himself, as he looked around him on the lovely scene, not altogether insensible to its beauty; "and, if I could only see my bairn married to some weel-doing lad, I wadna hae a care in this warld. But, Lord guide us! what'n a crature's yon, standing on the brae-head, like a bogle to scare the crows wi'? I wish she mayna frighten the powney." Just at that moment this wild and tattered figure leaped from the bank; and, springing forward, attempted to seize the bridle of the pony: but the animal started and plunged so violently, that it threw the old man; and then, finding itself free from its burden, set off, at a full gallop, down the lane.

"Deil's in the daft fule," said Gray, rising and shaking himself; "hae ye nae better morning's wark than to drive an honest man aff his beast, and maist break the banes o' him?"

"Haud yer hand, senseless crature," replied the mad woman, in a tone of lofty contempt; "haud yer hand, and dinna add sin to sorrow; be thankful yer head 's no broken, though I'm thinking ye 'll sune find a broken heart is waur to bind. Gang yer ways hame, and see if there 's no a waur fa' biding ye than that ye hae gotten frae me this morning. See if yer bonny daughter can dight the stain frae her gude name as readily as ye 'll ding aff the dirt frae yer auld coat!"

"For God's sake, woman, what do you mean?" asked the terrified father.

"I just mean that yer dochter's aff wi' a braw gentleman in a carriage and four—just the gait I gaed mysel—but see what cam o't?"

"Wha was in the carriage, woman?"

"Wha was in the carriage, man! am I no telling ye? It was either Amy Gray, or else mysel,—I dinna ken which," replied the crazy creature; "but weel do I ken him that was sitting beside her. Just the same gait did he look on me wi' his twa black glancing een; for there canna be twa in this weary warld, sae weel-faured and sae ill-minded.—And to tak my bairn frae me, too! Oh do ye ken whare they pat it? for I'm wearied seeking it night and day,—and the screeching blackgards in every town rinning after me,—and the very howlets and pyets laughing and chattering, and making a fule o' me about it!"

"Tut! she 's but a crazy body after all," muttered the poor man to himself, endeavouring to shake off the effect of her alarming address. "What needs I be terrifying mysel in this way wi' her nonsense?" so he turned from her, and walked forward to his own house at a quick pace.

The voice of his wife speaking cheerfully within the house relieved his heart, and he entered the little kitchen with an animated countenance. "How 's a' wi' ye, gudewife, and how are baith my bairns?" said he, looking round,—"But whare's Amy?—Alice, whare 's your cousin?"

"Amy 's no far aff, gudeman; she 'll be here belive,—she 's only doun at Lasswade for a gliffy."

"Uncle," said Alice, "Amy was at Thamson's kirn last night; my aunt allowed her to sleep at Lasswade, and she has been at Jess Tod's a' night."

"God grant it may be sae," returned the old man. "But I maun gang doun and see, for I wish a' may be right." With these words, he snatched up his hat, and darted from the house. Mrs. Gray followed calling after him, and endeavouring to assure him of her daughter's safety, but in vain; the anxious father hurried on. Alice partook deeply of her uncle's fears; all her former doubts and suspicions returned to her mind; and sick with apprehension, she awaited his return in breathless anxiety.

Her terror was by no means diminished when she saw her uncle return some time after, and enter the little garden alone. In his face of misery she read the confirmation of all her worst fears. She could not speak; but she clasped her uncle's hands, and gazed with fearful earnestness in his face.

"Gudeman, for God's sake, speak," said Mrs. Gray. "What ails ye?—where is Amy?—where is my bairn?"

"Gane, gane for ever,—gane wi' a villain," said the old man, with bitter emphasis. "Oh, it was ower true what that mad creature tauld me; for he 's carried her aff, and what can she look for, but shame and misery: to be thrown from him like a worthless weed whan he 's tired o' wearing her?"

"Dinna say that, John Gray," said his wife. "I'll never believe that my bairn 'ill gang siccan a gait: she's ower muckle sense, and ower muckle pride, to follow ony man and her no his leal wife. She might hae tell't her mither, to be sure, and I wad hae keepet her secret safe; but there 's reasons for a' things, and nae doubt we'll hear o' her sune. But, for God's sake, sit doun, gudeman, for ye 're no weel able to stand: yer breath 's clean gane, and yer e'en are starting out o' yer head like a wull cat's."

"Dear uncle, do sit doun; it 's true that my aunt 's saying. Ye 're no able for all ye've done,—ye maun lie doun a little," urged Alice.

"Na, na, Alice, I'll never lie doun till I ken what 's come o' my bairn. I maun awa' to Edinburgh, and see what help I can get there. But gie me a drink—ony thing that 's cauld, for my head 's burning." His wife gave him a jug of beer, which he drank off at a draught; then rising, he took his hat, and would have put it on, but, staggering back a pace, he exclaimed, "My head! my head!" and fell senseless on the ground.

Alice flew to his relief. She untied his neckcloth, for his face was purple and swollen; then raising his head upon her lap, she called to her aunt, for God's sake, to bring her some water. The poor woman stood stupified, unable to speak or to move. "Oh, bring me water!—he 's only in a faint.

There's some one in the garden,—call on any body to help us!" The poor woman ran out into the garden, and returned in a moment followed by William Douglas, whom she met coming to the house. "Oh, William, God has sent you in our greatest need!—run, for Heaven's sake, to Lasswade, and bring the doctor,—my uncle's very ill." Douglas saw the state in which the poor man was, and without a word of question or reply, hurried to obey the orders of Alice.

Alas! it was too late. Before the surgeon came, her uncle was gone for ever. Indeed, the only symptom of life he had shown since his fall, was once raising his hand with a convulsive motion to his head, while Alice sat supporting him upon her lap; but the next moment it fell powerless by his side, and she knew that all was over.

Her aunt had run out to seek the assistance of her neighbours, believing that her husband was only in a swoon; and when William returned with the surgeon, they found Alice still sitting on the ground supporting her uncle's head. "Oh, you are too late, I fear," said the poor girl; "he is gone, I fear, for ever." The surgeon put his hand to the pulse, and, taking out his lancets, attempted to bleed the unfortunate man, but in vain,—the blood had taken a fatal direction to the head, and the attack had been mortal.

The surgeon assisted Douglas in removing the body into the next room, whither Alice would have followed it; but he begged her now to think of herself. "You do not seem strong, my good girl; and this has been a severe trial on you. You must now attend to your own health." But of herself Alice could not think: who was to acquaint her poor aunt with the fatal event? who should prepare her for this heavy blow? Douglas guessed her thoughts, and entreating her to spare herself, assured her that he would go and meet her aunt, and tell her every thing.

In a short time they entered the house; and Alice saw, in the increased agitation of William's countenance, that her aunt had acquainted him with Amy's flight, and the cause of all this misery. The tears ran down the cheeks of Alice as she held out her hand to William, who took it and pressed it with fervour. For some minutes he was unable to speak; but at length, "Oh, Alice," he said, "we have been cruelly deceived! Did you suspect nothing o' all this?"

"Yes, William, I did suspect it,—at least I had reason to fear that Amy has long been attached to Herries; so did my poor uncle. But, oh! I never believed she could have had the heart to leave us; and of late I didna ken what to think. I did what I could to keep her out o' that bad man's way; but she never would open her heart to me, and I was working in the dark."

"Oh, we ha'e all been working in the dark, Alice," said William, with bitterness; "but nane were sae blinded as I was. I might ha'e kenned you better, vain senseless creature that I was; and for one sae heartless too!"

"Oh, dinna ca' her heartless, William!—she's no that!—I'm sure she never meant to bring such sorrow on us. She liked her father dearly, and wouldna ha'e hurted a hair o' his head: and cunningly, I'm sure, maun that wretch ha'e deceived her!"

"How do we ken if it's wi' her will that she's gaen wi' him?" said Douglas.

"Oh, William, that was what my uncle was going to Edinburgh to see about—to try and find them out; but now—oh, I have only you to look to, for I canna rest till I ken whether Amy's his wife or no, or whether she went wi' him willingly."

"His wife, Alice? I fear he's no the man to mak her that. I ha'e learnt mair about him since I was here, than ever I kenned before; and I was just coming on purpose to consult your uncle about it, little thinking o' what was to meet me here." He then informed Alice, that in looking over some old books and papers belonging to her aunt, he had met with several notices relating to Herries's birth. They consisted chiefly of letters from the young man's father, who signed himself "George Dalton;" the earlier ones were addressed to the husband of Marion Brown, the latter ones to herself. It appeared that Mr. Dalton was a gentleman of property in Yorkshire; and, by what William Douglas could gather from these papers, little doubt remained that Herries was his natural son, placed, as it appeared, for some years under the care of William and Marion Brown, but subsequently removed into Edinburgh for education. An anxious wish was expressed in these letters, that the boy should be kept ignorant of his parents, and especially prevented from any intercourse with his mother, who was alluded to as being in an unsound state of mind; and certain expressions contained in one of them left little doubt in Douglas's mind, as to the identity of this unfortunate mother. This letter was

apparently in reply to some communication from Widow Brown, and ran as follows:—

"I have received your letter with regard to that unfortunate woman, and have only to reply, that it is not with my consent that she is again at liberty. But those who had charge of her became unreasonable in their demands, and it is possible that my refusal to comply with these may have induced them to abandon it without informing me of their intention. I do not, however, see why I should continue to pay so large a sum for depriving the poor creature of her liberty. She is harmless; and in the long period which has elapsed, has probably forgotten those whom it certainly would be unadvisable that she should remember. The fancy of calling herself Lady Bothwell is fortunate in every way. You acted against my wishes at first, in having any communication with her, and must now take the consequence; but should she prove seriously troublesome, I shall take steps for her removal," &c.

Another letter threw some light upon the character of Herries; but it was not of a favourable nature. It alluded to complaints which had been made against him by the person with whom he lodged in Edinburgh, and contained the following passage:—"I must trouble you again to find a more suitable person, under whom to place that wild boy. The accounts I receive of his extravagance and dissipation are such as might almost induce me to throw him off for ever; yet God knows what he may be reserved for! He who stands between this prodigal and a fair inheritance, may in one moment be taken from me, and then —— but it is idle to speculate."

The perusal of these papers afforded no relief to the uneasiness of Alice. In the knowledge of Herries's parents, they had, it is true, something which might serve as a clue by which to trace his movements; but still it did not appear probable that he would carry Amy into England. Edinburgh would more likely be selected for their seclusion, and there Douglas resolved to seek them. In the meantime, however, the arrangements consequent upon the death of Farmer Gray required their attention, for his widow was totally unfit to think or to act upon the occasion. But it was no small relief to Alice to see, that however unable to make herself useful her aunt might be, she found no small relief in weeping over and talking of her misfortunes to every neighbour who came in; and of these spiritual comforters she soon assembled a strong party, who all poured in consolation according to their several abilities.

"Dear heart!" said Mrs. Peddie; "it's an awfu' dispensation this, and sae sudden too: but we maun a' die; it's a debt we maun a' pay! and he was ten years aulder than yersel, gudewife, was he no?"

"Ten years!" repeated the sobbing widow, "na, ye little ken, woman; he was mair than twal. A'body wondered whan we gaed thegither; but what's a' that now—I'll no miss him the less;" and the sobbing recommenced more violently.

"Nae doubt, nae doubt, that's true; but ye suld mind, gudewife, that he was the full ripe corn—ready for the sickle, and no caff, to be ta'en unawares. His spiritual affairs were weel seen to, and nae doubt sae were his temporals: ye'll be weel seen to, Mrs. Gray."

"Ay, ye'll no hae poverty and grief baith at ance hadding you doon, like mony a puir body," said Jess Tod; "and ye needna grudge on ye're mournings; tho' I'll mak them cheaper than ony o' your Edinburgh queans. Ye hae but ae bairn too."

"And she's provided for," interrupted the impatient Mrs. Thompson, who had long been watching to get in her word. "I aye thought we wad hae news o' her bonny face; I never saw muckle gude come o' sae muckle beauty. Thank Heaven! my twa lassies are just neebour-like."

"Ye're thankfu' for sma' mercies, neebour," returned Mrs. Gray, somewhat tartly. "They said I wasna that ill-faured mysel', ance; yet I think I have gotten on in the world just as weel as others: God forgie me for saying sae now. But as to my puir bairn, ye needna be for lifting her up, before ye're sure she's doon: but I ken what ye're at; ye're spited at her because she wadna tak up wi' your Jock."

"Weel, I hope she's taen up wi' nae waur, neebour," replied Mrs. Thompson—"But here comes Alice, and she's a credit till ony house."

Alice came to thank the neighbours for their attention, and to dismiss them for the night, permitting only Mrs. Peddie to remain, at her aunt's solicitation, she being supposed best to understand the art of consolation.

Next morning, Douglas, who had walked early to Lasswade, in hopes of picking up some intelligence, returned with a letter addressed to Alice, which, upon opening, she found to be from Amy, and to run as follows:—

"Dear Alice,—I write to you, for ye've been mair than a sister to me, and aye my best friend and counsellor; and now ye maun stand my advocate wi' my dear father and mother, and get them to forgie their bairn, for a' the distress she may hae gien them. But I could not prevent it—for I didna ken what was to happen. But dinna think he took me awa' against my will: that wasna the case. There's muckle about it that I canna tell at present; but there's neither sin nor shame in it, farther than no consulting my parents; but that he wadna let me do, and I've to trust a' to him. I hope, however, that the day will soon come when I may ask their blessing on mair than myself, and my father and mother be proud to gie it. But meantime they maun mak no inquiries about it,—for that wad only breed mischief,—and trust to hearing from me; for I hope the sun will soon get above the mist, and a' that's dark at present will be cleared up to their satisfaction. I wish I could hear about you all; but I maun just bide till things tak a turn. Meantime, dear Alice, dinna think hardly o' me; for I had a ravelled pirn to wind, and was aft obliged to go in and out rather than break it a' thegether. And now I maun say, God bless my dear family, prays their loving daughter,

Amy."

Such was the letter, and it conveyed great relief to Alice's mind, for it convinced her that however he might desire to conceal it from his parents for a time, her cousin was in truth the wife of Herries. "Oh," thought she, "had we received this letter before my uncle came home, all might yet have been well. Poor Amy, little do you think what a price ye hae payed for the rash step ye've taen; and sorely will ye suffer, poor thing, when ye ken how dear it's cost ye; and God knows, there's mair will suffer than you. A ravelled pirn ye've made o' it; but, better ye had broken yere ain thread, than tangled others wi' it. But may God forgie her as freely as I do; it will be a comfort to her mother, and to poor William, to see this letter," saying which, Alice arose and sought her aunt.

We must now leave the family at Billstane glen, and follow the thoughtless Amy to a small lodging in the vicinity of Edinburgh, where Herries had carried her immediately after their elopement. Amy had not deceived her parents in saying, that she herself was unprepared for the suddenness of that step. She had no farther object in remaining behind her mother, on the evening when it took place, than the hopes of seeing her lover, who had concerted with her this plan of meeting at Farmer Thompson's merry making. This he easily effected; for, no sooner was he aware of Mrs. Gray's retreat, than he sauntered towards the barn, which was the scene of this rural festivity, and after remaining some time a mere spectator, was, as he expected, invited by some idlers near the door, to join in the dance: he thus obtained all the opportunity he desired of communicating with Amy, and soon prevailed upon her to leave her companions, and accompany him to a place where they could converse at greater liberty.

The object of this conversation was to induce his mistress no longer to delay their mutual happiness, but to consent to a private marriage, and go off with him that very night, while her father's absence, and her mother's permission for her to sleep at Lasswade, all favoured their operations. It is useless to detail the arguments which her lover made use of in order to bring Amy into his views. They were at last unhappily successful, and with the sole stipulation, that they should drive immediately to the house of a clergyman in the vicinity of Edinburgh, on whose secrecy they could depend, did Amy yield to the pleadings of her lover, and ere another hour had passed over her head, she was the wife of Herries.

It seems probable that Herries himself was scarcely more prepared than his mistress for taking this last irrevocable step. Perhaps he had hopes of gaining her upon easier terms, but the difficulty which he found in reconciling her even to this far less alarming measure, effectually prevented any hint of a more questionable description. As for the confiding Amy, she believed his hesitation to have been alone occasioned by the difficulties of his situation, and his ignorance regarding those on whom he was dependant; and certainly, on his first acquaintance with Amy, this consideration had influenced his conduct, and had induced him frequently to absent himself, and to struggle against that ascendency which she was daily gaining over him. He could not forget that, in forming a connexion beneath himself, he risked the displeasure of his patrons, for although ignorant of his parents, it was impossible for him to doubt that he had been born in the rank of a gentleman. His education had been liberal, his supplies were equally so; and although the irregularities of his conduct had

met with reprehension, involving even a threat of forfeiting the means of support, and of being abandoned for ever, these were often coupled with expressions of earnest anxiety for his welfare, and the most impressive cautions against forming any connexions which might embarrass him in future, should he be called upon to move in a higher rank of life. Often had these cautions occurred to his mind during his first acquaintance with Amy Gray; but the witchery of her beauty had been too powerful for his resolution, and now the possession of so lovely and innocent a creature, banished from his mind every thought beyond those of exultation at having secured his prize.

This dream of happiness continued longer than such visions do in general; for the sweetness and gaiety of his young wife combined with her beauty in securing to her a very powerful influence over the affections even of the fickle and selfish Herries. But this state of things could not last for ever. Amy had urged her husband repeatedly to write his guardian and own his marriage. It was better, she justly observed, to ascertain their real situation at once, than to live on in concealment and haunted by a constant dread of detection. But Herries never wanted a reason for delaying this communication: "He should wait," he said, "until his next quarterly allowance should be paid; it would be madness to risk its being withheld, which would undoubtedly be the case upon the first disclosure of his rashness. He must also wait the next letter from his guardian, which had been longer delayed than usual; the tone of these would enable him to judge how far it might be safe to commit themselves by a confession." Amy sighed, and anxiously awaited the arrival of these important dispatches.

They came at last; and Herries eagerly tearing open the packet, exclaimed, "It is from my guardian!" while his young wife stood by, and watched with intense interest the countenance of her husband. She had reason to be uneasy, for it seemed that the communication affected him powerfully. He started as he read the first few lines; the colour rose to his very temples, and his eyes seemed to devour the words as he proceeded. "Good God! do I see aright!" he exclaimed. "Oh, had this but reached me sooner."

"What can you mean, dear Charles? Tell me—oh tell me, has he heard of our marriage?"

"Marriage! married!" repeated he, and struck his forehead violently: "But see—read this, Amy, for know it you must sooner or later; and then your love for me, and your own good sense, will show you how well it was that I did not yield to your desire of declaring our marriage."

Trembling with alarm, Amy took the letter and read as follows:—

"My dear Son,—for now I may call you such,—it has pleased Providence to take from me the only child with which my marriage had been blessed. The loss, though long contemplated by me, has fallen on me heavily. Although the child was weak and puny from its infancy, and that its life for some time past has been almost a miracle, still every year which passed over him added to the hopes of his mother, and to my difficulties with regard to your future destiny. I had never concealed your existence from my wife. The first years of our married life giving no prospect of a family, I was early led to interest her in your behalf, and succeeded so far, that it was with her concurrence you received the education of a gentleman, although we deemed it prudent to keep you in ignorance of the title which you had to receive it. I shall not conceal from you, Charles, that had our boy lived, you never should have known your father, otherwise than as a liberal benefactor, who had educated and would have provided for you. In such case it was my intention to have placed you in the army, and settled five thousand pounds upon you, provided I had been satisfied with your conduct. That this last has not always been the case, I need scarcely remind you; but I take this opportunity of distinctly declaring, that whether I am to bring you forward as Charles Dalton, my son and heir, or Charles Herries, my illegitimate offspring, will entirely depend upon your future conduct and the connexions you may form. I have only to add, that upon receipt of this, you will pay off your lodgings in Edinburgh, and all outstanding accounts, and proceed without delay by the York mail to Dalton Manor," &c.

Thunderstruck at what she had read, poor Amy stood like one stupified, unable to comprehend its full import. Then returning the letter to her husband, she threw herself upon his bosom and wept bitterly. Herries soothed and caressed her for a while, and then ventured to observe. "Well, Amy, you will allow that I was right in not yielding to your wish of disclosing our marriage to my guardian, or, I should rather say, my

father, at such a time; think what his wrath would have been at this moment."

"Oh, would to God you had disclosed it!" said his weeping wife; "and oh, Charles! if not for my sake, at least for your own, weigh well the consequences of such concealment; better by far to bide the full burst of your father's anger now while you are yet but as a stranger to him, than steal into his bosom, take the place of a son, and win his confidence, only to deceive him: that were indeed to bring down tenfold misery on your head!"

"This is a matter, Amy, you must leave entirely to my discretion," said her husband. "You surely would not wish to be the means of bringing down ruin upon me, when, by a little patience and management, all that you are most desirous of may assuredly be brought about. Let me but once gain a place in my father's love, and fear not but that the rest will be effected in a little time. My greatest difficulty is how to leave you, my dearest Amy!"

"Leave me?" exclaimed Amy, starting from him. "God forgi'e you for saying such a word!—and is it for this that I left all to follow you? But hear me, Charles Herries—or Dalton, if sae it is to be; for my husband you are, equally whatever name ye bear, or whoever may be your father—as a wife I shall obey you in all things, so far as my poor sense o' duty goes; but when I swore to abide by you, through good report and bad report, you did the like by me; therefore speak not o' leaving me. I shall wait your own time to own me as your wife in the sight o' man; but in the sight o' God I am sae, and, with God's blessing, as such I shall act."

Herries was little prepared for this display of determination in his wife's character. As yet, he had only experienced her sweetness, liveliness, and affection; but he now discovered that it would be by no means advisable to push to extremities a disposition which might be influenced by kindness, but scarcely swayed by authority. He saw that it was necessary to temporize, at all events; and accordingly resolved to carry Amy with him into England, to place her in a lodging in York, where her residence would give rise to no suspicion, and where he might see her frequently, while he felt his way with his family. In the mean time, he sought to remove from the mind of his wife the unlucky impression he had given; but although she acquiesced in the present scheme, and met his advances with sweetness and affection, a deep wound had been given to her heart. Her confidence in the depth and generosity of her husband's love was greatly shaken; and she saw with sorrow that her interest and happiness was by no means his only, or even his first consideration.

Upon reaching York, Herries's first measure was to place Amy in a small lodging in the suburbs of the town; and there, with a young girl who acted as her servant, did he leave his solitary wife to arrange her little household, and then to sit down and weep, as she looked around her and felt all so strange, so desolate! Poor Amy! her heart swelled as she remembered the cheerful fireside at Billstane glen, and thought of her father, her mother, of her own dear generous Alice. Oh, could they at that moment have seen her,—she who had been their idol, the object of their every thought and care: what was she now? a deserted wife; an encumbrance to the very man for whom she had abandoned home and friends! The mist which vanity and passion had spread before her eyes, was now cleared away, and she saw too clearly the misery that lay before her. "Oh," thought she, "if in these early days of our love, he can suffer warld's wealth to draw him frae me, weak indeed is the reed I have to trust to, when spirits fail and beauty fades! God knows that if my love and duty could make his happiness, little is it that would suffice for mine; but oh! I wasna fitted for a Leddy, and so, I fear, he sune will think! But I maunna sit sorrowing here this gait, or I'll sune tyne my rosy cheeks, and that 'll no mak matters ony better; I maun try to keep my heart up, and see gin things mayna turn out better than we think for; for, as auld Janet used to say, 'the night is aye mirkest whan it's near the dawn.'"

And Amy thought that the dawn was indeed breaking around her, when, after the second day of solitude, she was again pressed to the heart of her truant husband. As she clung to his bosom, and bound her arms around him, she felt as if her happiness were sevenfold restored to her, when, looking in his face, she read there that his delight was equal to her own. Oh could she but have held him there for ever, what would all the world beside have been to her.

Herries now asked a thousand questions, which all showed that, though absent in person, she had been ever in his thoughts; and he came provided with many little comforts, and every thing he could devise to amuse

her in her solitude. He had brought her books, and as she spoke of them, he proposed to her that she should now give a part of her leisure hours to the improvement of her mind. Amy had received, it is true, greater advantages of education than most girls in her station; but she had been a careless scholar, and readily confessed that she lacked much, which, as his wife, it would be highly expedient to supply; and she expressed her earnest wish to do so. Her husband promised every assistance in his power to promote so desirable an end; but as it would not be possible for him to be her daily teacher, he said he should endeavour to supply her with a suitable person to act in his stead. Nothing could have been more gratifying to Amy than this scheme, and the interest which her husband appeared to take in it; for she saw in it a preparation for the future — an earnest of happiness which might one day be realized, and which filled her sanguine heart with hope and comfort. What would she not undertake to fit herself to be his companion, the wife he should one day present to his family! And Amy, in her turn, asked a thousand questions about that family. How had he been received? had his father been kind to him? did he see any prospect of speedily ingratiating himself with his parents? Charles expressed his hope and conviction that he should succeed in time; but declared that time and patience would both be required. His father, he added, was kind, but reserved — Mrs. Dalton civil, but distant; and haughty, he thought, in her manner. As yet there had been but little confidential conversation between his father and him; and the little which had passed, related chiefly to the difficulties which his father had encountered in bringing him forward in the world. His father's property was, it seemed, all at his own disposal; but failing their son, Mrs. Dalton had always wished her husband to consider her own relations as the persons to succeed to their fortune; and it had mortified her not a little to find that Mr. Dalton did not agree with her in this point. Herries observed, that all these circumstances called loudly for a continuance of caution upon their part; and Amy, with a deep sigh, was forced to acquiesce.

She now came to the resolution of not clouding the few hours of her husband's stay with anticipations of doubt and gloom. "There will be time enough to weep while he is absent," said she to herself; "he will come the oftener, if he finds a smiling face to welcome him." But it was not always that Amy could smile away the tears which hope deferred, and sickening disappointment, too often caused to flow. As time passed on, she saw less of her husband, and that little was ill-calculated to relieve her increasing care. It is true that he still met her with fondness, sometimes even with agitation; but, while he pressed her to his bosom, the emotion he displayed appeared to arise from painful rather than pleasing associations. She could see that he was restless and pre-occupied; that something, which he had not courage to communicate, lay heavy on his mind, and gave, even to his caresses, an air of constraint. Amy had also a communication to make, but it was one which she believed would give her husband a pleasure almost equal to her own; for, in the hopes of being a mother, she saw a recompense for suffering, for solitude, and every other ill. What then was her horror at seeing that the intelligence only added to the gloom and disquiet of him, who should have been the most eager to congratulate and support her. "Oh Charles," exclaimed she, in the bitterness of her heart, "can you grieve that I shall have something to love, something to cling to in the hours and days when I am left alone?"

"No, Amy," he replied, "God knows I should not grieve at that, for one part of the suffering which weighs upon me at this moment, is, that I came to tell you I must leave you for a short time. Yes, Amy, my father is going on a visit to Mrs. Dalton's relations, and he wishes me to accompany him."

Not as formerly did the poor girl exclaim against this continued abandonment; neglect and suffering had subdued that high spirit, and, in the present instance, she felt that she had only to submit.

Bitter was the parting between Amy and her husband! When left alone, she sank into a state of listless melancholy, alike injurious to mental and bodily exertion. Her studies, in which, at first, her husband took considerable interest, but of late he had seldom inquired about, were now entirely thrown aside: for hours would she sit gazing on vacancy, until some thought, perhaps of home, and all she had forsaken for him who thus neglected her, would rise before her, and a burst of tears would relieve for a time the oppression of her heart.

But Amy, by degrees, awoke to better thoughts. The time approached when she would have something to care for in this cold

and heartless world: and, as she sat and worked for her baby, she felt a melancholy pleasure in an occupation which could not fail to interest so young and warm a heart. She had forced herself at length to attend more to her health; and, as the spring advanced, she often walked to a neighbouring garden, which possessed a strong interest for her, for the couple to whom it belonged were Scottish; and to hear the accents of her own country, spoken in a land of strangers, was a medicine to her wounded spirit.

But, in our interest for the deserted wife, we must not altogether forget her gentle cousin, who, amidst her own share of sorrows still thought of the absent Amy with all a sister's love. In vain had she looked to hear from her cousin; month after month had elapsed, but no second letter ever came. William Douglas, after making every possible inquiry in and about Edinburgh, had learned from a college friend of Herries's, that the young man had left that place for England, some weeks after the period of Amy's disappearance; but this was the amount of all his information, nor did there remain any farther means of tracing the fugitives. Even the unfortunate maniac, whom they knew to be so nearly connected with Herries, seemed to have left the country, and Alice conjectured that she might again be in confinement. Nothing remained but to await with patience, until it should please Heaven to afford her tidings of her poor lost cousin.

Her aunt's temper, under her severe trials, had been daily getting worse. In vain did Alice exert the most unwearied attention and kindness to soothe and cheer her; nothing she did was right. She declared that if she did not soon hear from her daughter, she would fret herself to death, and she seemed determined that it should not be alone. In all this distress, Alice's greatest comfort was when Douglas could obtain leave from his master to pass a day at Billstane cottage. Confidence and kindness were again quickly re-establishing themselves between them; and that feeling of shame and reproach, which for some time kept William at a distance, was fast yielding to the influence of Alice's gentle and engaging dispositions.

But even of this only solace, was poor Alice soon destined to be deprived. One day, Douglas came to inform her, that his master had just desired him to prepare for a journey into Yorkshire, in order to superintend the erection of a green-house, at the seat of his brother, in which some new improvements were to be introduced under William's care. "I shall not be long absent," added he, "and when I return, my kind master has signified his intention to promote me to the place of upper gardener, and I shall then have good wages, and a comfortable house; and then, dear Alice, when I return from Yorkshire, perhaps——"

"Perhaps," said the blushing Alice, interrupting him,—"Perhaps you will then have heard something of our poor lost Amy."

William coloured deeply as he replied, "Yes, Alice, for *your* sake and her mother's, I will make every inquiry about the unfortunate Amy. But it was not of her I was thinking, when I said—— But I had best keep my mind to mysel, perhaps; and no risk angering you. Only, dear Alice, think of me kindly when I am away, and let me write to you what I may learn of poor Amy." And William and Alice parted on these terms.

No long time elapsed before a letter from Douglas arrived; and though, as yet, he had heard nothing directly concerning Amy, his letter still contained much which was interesting to her cousin. Among other matters, he mentioned, that while riding on the top of the coach a few miles from York, his attention had been arrested by a figure so closely resembling the maniac who called herself "Lady Bothwell," that he felt almost assured it was she; but the rapid motion of the coach had prevented him from ascertaining the fact beyond a doubt. He then informed her that, in reply to her inquiries regarding the family at Dalton manor, he had learned that Mr. Dalton, soon after losing his boy, had brought forward and introduced into society an illegitimate son, whom it was said he intended to make his heir, and between whom and his cousin, a niece of Mr. Dalton's, a marriage was confidently said to be in contemplation. Of the unfortunate Amy he could hear nothing: no one appeared to know that such a being existed. He ended by observing, that as the greater number of the neighbouring gentlemen would probably be assembled together at the races, which were to take place in a few days, he should attend them in hopes of seeing or hearing something of Herries, and that he would leave nothing unattempted to discover the fate of the unfortunate Amy.

There was another who, with blighted heart and worn-out frame, resolved to drag her wearied limbs to this scene of joyous festivity,

in the hope of seeing there, perhaps for the last time, the perjured husband who seemed now to have utterly forsaken her.

Months had passed away since Amy had parted from her husband; and during this long and weary period, a few hurried lines, after great intervals of silence, was all she had received from him. At last came a letter desiring that she should not hazard any farther communication with him; but assuring her that he should soon be with her, and take measures to prepare for her approaching confinement. Too late, at length, did Amy see that she had nothing to hope from the justice or generosity of so selfish a being; and she determined to await but the event of her confinement, when, if the feelings of a father should fail to move this unnatural husband to do justice to his child, she then, at all hazard, would act as became a mother, and make known her story to his family. What was all their wealth to her? It could not give her back what she had lost,—it could never restore her husband's love. But she owed to the worth of her honest parents, to her own character, and to the innocent creature she was about to give birth to, that her marriage should no longer remain a secret; and this duty she resolved to perform.

In the mean time, accounts reached her of the return of the family to Dalton manor. A large party was there assembled to attend the York races; and among other reports, Amy heard it said, that the newly brought forward heir was paying his addresses to the beautiful niece of Mr. Dalton. Unworthy as he had proved himself, she scarcely could believe in such wanton baseness; for what could he propose by it? She was herself his lawful wedded wife, beyond all question; yet, spite of this conviction, some fearful glimmerings of the informality of Scottish marriages, and a scarcely admitted dread of the possibility of his intention to disown her, would flash across her terrified mind. Might she not be unwise to await even the period of her confinement? what events might not even a day bring forth? She was tossed on a sea of irresolution and doubt; and in this fever of mind she determined to go where she knew he would be, to see him once more, and to act as Providence might appoint.

Amy was by this time unable to walk any distance; but the good old Scottish couple, who had taken a great interest in her, and who were to have a booth near the race-ground for the sale of their fruits and flowers, offered to take her along with them in their little cart. The eventful morning came; and Amy, with a sick and fluttering heart, prepared to accompany her only friends to the scene of general gaiety. Sad as was that heart, it beat with a feeling not unallied to pleasure, as they stopt at the spot where Andrew Fairbairn had exhibited all the riches of his thriving garden. Andrew's booth stood apart from the grand confusion, upon a little height which overlooked the race-course; and it had been the old man's pride to deck it out with all the flowers of his native country he could collect. He had walked several miles to gather a sufficiency of heather and of broom, to cover in the little bothy; and, bright in its purple and yellow blossoms, it attracted the attention of all the idlers who passed by. Many a nosegay was bought that day from Andrew Fairbairn; and many who came to purchase the blooming flowers, remained some moments to gaze upon the pale living rose which sheltered there, and shrunk from notice!

"Do, Miss Mowbray, leave the stand for a moment, and come with me," said the young Laird of Hazeldean. "I will show you the prettiest Highland hut you ever saw out of Scotland. Oh, do not wait for Charles, —he has a bet upon the Marquis's filly, and has eyes for nothing else just now. Dalton, you can follow us, when the race is over, to that little heather hut at the end of the race-course; your Scottish heart will soon find it out." And away went the gay Harry Gordon, with his beautiful charge, to the booth of Andrew Fairbairn.

If Miss Mowbray was delighted with the Highland bothy, she was still more interested by the lovely but fragile creature who sat within it. In vain did Amy shrink from her observation. Miss Mowbray's curiosity was of a sort not easily checked. Complaining of the heat, she begged to rest herself a few minutes, and declared she should treat herself with some of the old man's fruit. Amy was thus forced to attend upon her; and her sweet Scottish accents, when she answered their questions, delighted Harry Gordon and his lovely companion. But another voice was at that moment heard without, which arrested the attention of the whole party. In a wild and high-pitched key, it sang the old Scottish song, "My love built me a bonnie bower,"—"And a bonnie bower in troth, sir, it is," exclaimed the songstress, stopping short close by the place where Gordon stood. "Hech, sirs! it's just like that o' puir Bessy Bell and Mary Gray;

but they couldna keep the plague out o' it, an' neither can you, I'm thinking, for there's a man in it already, — and when did a man ever visit maiden's bower without bringing mischief to it?"

"By heavens! it's my old acquaintance, Lady Bothwell," exclaimed Gordon; "and what has brought your ladyship so far from home?"

"Far frae hame?" repeated the maniac; "and how do ye ken sae weel whare my hame may be? I'se warrant there's as braw houses in England, as ever there were in Scotland, and I've lived in them as lang, too; but I'm thinking there's mair frae hame than me, here. Hech, sirs, isna that Amy Gray? Wha wad ha'e thought o' her leaving bonnie Billstane burn to seek for a hame amang thae glaiket Englishers; and a bonnie hame they'll find for her — a wisp o' strae, and bread and water in a nook o' Bedlam; that's the hame he put me into, and how will ye like that, my bonnie dow? Better for ye to ha'e stayed wi' yer auld father; but he's dead an' gane, puir man!"

"Dead!" exclaimed Amy, springing forward, and seizing the crazy creature by the arm. "Oh, dinna say sae! — tell me, for God's sake, is my father dead?"

The maniac burst into a wild laugh. "Ay, ye're a cunning ane, I'se warrant ye," replied she; "when ye ken a' body says ye murdered him yersel."

"Murdered him!" exclaimed Amy, with a piercing shriek, and sank lifeless on the ground.

"What's the matter, Miss Mowbray? what's all this confusion about?" demanded Charles Dalton and his father, who at this moment entered the bothy. "Good God! what means this?" exclaimed the young man, as his eye fell upon the insensible form of Amy, which lay prostrate before him; "who has done this?"

"Wha has done it?" echoed the mad woman, turning upon him her wild and scornful eyes. "I'll tell ye wha did it; it was just the deevil in the shape o' a Dalton. Puir thing, she thought he was an angel; she didna notice his cloven feet. But troth, I wasna muckle wiser mysel; for first he took my gude name frae me, and syne my bonnie face: and yet weel did I like him, till he took my puir bairnie! Ay, Amy, ye'll no ken it's the deevil till he taks your bairnie; and then ye'll care little whether it's to heaven or hell ye'll gang to seek it in."

"Peace, wretched woman," cried young Dalton, seizing her fiercely, with the intention of pushing her from the hut. But his arm was arrested by a young man, who, just then forcing his way through the crowd, exclaimed, in loud and resolute tones, "Stay your hand, rash man; add not to your sins by so unnatural an outrage: touch not that unfortunate, for know that she is your parent, your unhappy mother! Yes, Charles Dalton, it is true. God has this day raised up witnesses to your sin and to your shame; nor can they be silent any longer. Answer me, Charles Dalton, here, in the presence of your family, what have you done with Amy Gray? where is your innocent and helpless wife?—But, my God! what is this? Can it be possible? Wretched, unfortunate girl! he has then indeed destroyed you!" And William Douglas threw himself by the still senseless form, and gazing on that face which he had so lately beheld in all the glow of health and beauty, now shrunk and lifeless, he scarce could repress a bitter curse upon her heartless betrayer. At length, after collecting himself for some moments, he turned to the elder Mr. Dalton, "For God's sake, sir," said he, "if you are indeed a Christian, have pity on this unhappy young creature, and help me to have her removed into some more fitting place than this; and if, as I believe you are, the father of that young man, know — "

"Peace, I charge you, Douglas," interrupted Charles Dalton, once more coming forward. "Be silent — this is no place for that which you would say. Follow me, if you will, to my father's house, and hear all that I shall say to my father. I have now no purpose of concealment — would to God I never had — But let us first place this most unhappy one in safety: that is my first duty."

Harry Gordon, who had been a wondering, and by no means unmoved spectator of this singular and unexpected scene, now made offer of his uncle's carriage, which was at no great distance, to convey the poor sufferer to her home; and the still unconscious Amy was carefully lifted, in the arms of her husband, and placed in it; while Douglas and the good old couple, who were resolved not to lose sight of their charge, followed in their little cart.

Arrived at Amy's lodging, every means were employed to recover her from the deadly swoon in which she still lay. It was long ere any symptoms of returning animation appeared to relieve the anxiety of her atten-

dants; and, when she did at length open her eyes, it was but to gaze wildly around her, and then, as if in dread of what they might meet, to close them again. After a while, the colour which had long deserted her cheek, began to show itself in heightened tints; but it was the flush of pain and not of health; and Mrs. Fairbairn and Dalton became aware that more skilful aid than theirs would soon be necessary.

"Douglas," said the agitated husband, "you must run for medical assistance. I cannot leave my poor wife in this hour of trial. Go also to my father, and tell him I am with my unfortunate wife; and that this will be my home until God restores her to me."

It was amidst the most violent bodily and mental agony that the unfortunate Amy at length gave birth to a little girl; and, as her sufferings in some degree subsided, she lay exhausted and quiet, apparently unconscious of every thing around her. Her husband never left her; and, if Justice had sought to inflict upon him a punishment commensurate with his crime, he endured it in witnessing the sufferings of his victim, and listening to the ravings of her fevered mind. Sad as he now felt it to gaze on her pale face as it lay in almost lifeless stillness, it was heaven to what he had experienced in watching its convulsive agonies; and he fervently blessed God that the storm had passed away, whatever might yet be its effects.

The doctor now declared that every thing depended upon perfect quiet, and using all possible means for promoting sleep. He likewise advised Dalton to leave her to the care of Mrs. Fairbairn and himself, lest, when she should awake to consciousness, she might suffer from agitation at seeing him near her. In obedience to these suggestions of his medical friend, Dalton retired to a neighbouring hotel, where he resolved to employ the next few hours in writing to his father, to confess his ties to Amy, and his resolution to abide by them. That this confession was now wrung from him, principally by the impossibility of farther concealment, appears sufficiently evident from his previous conduct. The heart of this unprincipled young man had been hardened by sudden and unexpected prosperity; and it is too certain that he had resolved, if possible, to shake himself free of an encumbrance which interrupted his ambitious views. The circumstance of his being under age at the time of his marriage, and the absence of any other witness than the clergyman who performed the ceremony, encouraged him in the belief that this might be effected. But circumstances which he could not control, had defeated these projects. The striking events, too, which he had just witnessed, and the misery of his young and wretched wife, had awakened the better feelings of his nature, at least for the time; and nothing now remained but to throw himself on the mercy of his father, and trust to the beauty and virtues of Amy, to soften his resentment.

Amidst the agitation and confusion of the scenes which had just taken place, Dalton could scarcely judge of the impression which had been made upon the mind of his father, by the unexpected declaration of William Douglas. That Mr. Dalton's agitation at the extraordinary address of the mad woman had been even greater than his own, had not escaped his observation; nor had he failed to remark, that the moment the wretched creature had turned her eyes upon his father she had screamed, and fled from the hut; but the situation of Amy had occupied him too intently to allow of his reflecting upon these circumstances before. The strange assertion of William Douglas, too, that the maniac was actually his mother, occurred to his recollection with pain and alarm; and he eagerly waited for an opportunity of questioning the young man with regard to this fearful mystery. These reflections, joined to his apprehensions for the fate of his wife, rendered that night the longest and most painful that Charles Dalton had ever spent.

All was yet quiet in the chamber of the young mother, when her husband, with the earliest light, stood by her bedside. Amy still slept peacefully and sweetly; but the extreme paleness of her face, and the sunken look of every feature, alarmed the anxious husband, and he watched with impatience for the arrival of the doctor. The first sounds which recalled Amy to consciousness, were the wailings of her baby; she was too weak to utter a word, but her opening eyes fell upon her husband standing at the fire with his head leaning on the mantel-piece, with the good Mrs. Fairbairn seated near him, holding an infant on her knee; a slight movement of Amy, drew Dalton to her bedside, and he saw with thankfulness that, although unable from weakness for the least exertion, she still was conscious of his presence. He hastened to support her with the cordials which the doctor had prescribed, and was soon gratified by observing the return of strength which they produced.

"Dearest Amy," said he, "I thank God you are restored to your grateful husband, and are the mother of a living child. Mrs. Fairbairn, bring hither our infant and let me place it in its mother's arms." Amy received her baby from her husband, and clasping it to her breast bathed it with her tears. Nor did she refuse to embrace the repentant father.

"Dearest Amy, dry these painful tears," said he; "they are the last, I trust, that I shall ever cause you to shed; my father by this time knows every thing, and now no power can separate you from me."

"Alas! there is a power which will separate us," replied the feeble voice of Amy, "a power which I feel through all this wasted frame, and which I have neither means nor wish to resist! Listen to me, my husband; for breath is ebbing fast away. For many months my life has been a trouble to me, and I have been long a burden to you, a burden from which I would fain set you free. I have but one favour to ask of you, and in the name of God do not refuse me. If my baby lives, send it to Alice. Oh dinna trust it to cauld English hearts, but send it where it will be made pious and humble, and mair fit for heaven than its poor mother is. But whose voice is that I hear. Oh let him in! Then it was not a dream when I thought I saw William Douglas? Oh Charles let me see William, for I maun speak to him."

Douglas, smothering his emotion, came forward to the bed, and grasped in silence the hand which Amy held out to him. "Tell me, William" said she, earnestly, "and tell me the truth, is my father dead? Oh was it me that killed him? was it a' true that fearfu' woman said?"

"Dearest Amy," said the agitated Douglas, "do not terrify yourself so. Your father was an old man, and God removed him in the fulness of his years, to a better world; your mother and Alice still live to bless you."

"Oh, William, never will I see their dear dear faces more. My body will lie amang strangers, far far frae my ain kindred and bonny Billstane glen. But take my baby there; oh swear to me, my husband, that you will send it to Alice, for she will make it good like herself. Alice always loved you, William! God forgie me for the ill I wrought her! But she will love you still. Tell her to do so for my sake, and you will be a father to my baby. Oh, my husband, swear to me that she shall never be trusted to the rich and the great; let her go to Billstane glen, and I will die in peace, upon your bosom."

Dalton, inexpressibly agitated, could not immediately reply; he clasped her to his breast, and in broken accents promised solemnly to obey her. Amy's only reply was a convulsive embrace, it was her last effort; in another moment her feeble arms relaxed their hold, and she sunk upon the bed a lifeless corpse.

It was a lovely evening in the end of autumn when Alice observed a young woman with a baby in her arms, accompanied by a man who carried a bundle in one hand, and a trunk upon his shoulder, advancing down the road of Billstane glen. The evening was shutting in, and Alice could not distinguish the features of those who thus approached her. But as the young man drew near, he dropt his load, threw from him his bundle, and snatching the infant from the woman's arms, sprang forwards, exclaiming, "Alice! dearest Alice! did you not know me?"

"Oh, William, is it you indeed! and, Amy, dear lost Amy! this is your baby! My poor poor Amy! and this is all that is left me of you! Oh let me take it to my heart! fondly shall it be cherished, and faithfully will I obey her dying wishes."

"And will you obey all her wishes, Alice?" whispered her lover, "and take another to your heart, who promised to be a father to that baby?" Alice, the happy Alice, did not say no; but gently releasing herself from the arms of her lover, carried the baby into the cottage, and amid tears and smiles saw it pressed to the bosom of its grandmother.

And here I would willingly close the story of the Cousins. As

> I do not write for that dull elf,
> Who cannot picture to himself,

I would leave it to my readers to apportion according to their several notions of justice and of mercy, the meed of reward or punishment, which they think due to the various characters of the piece. But for the sake of the unreasonable few, who may persist in "wondering what became of Dalton?" and "whether the baby lived," or who "think the author might as well have told us whether William and Alice were married," &c. I will shortly declare, that Charles Dalton, in reply to his letter to his father, received a few lines enclosing a commision in a regiment on the eve of embarking for India, with a draft for three thousand pounds, and informing

him that this was all he was ever to look for from a father he had deceived and of a family he had disgraced.

Three happy years had passed of the married life of William and Alice, when the first tears they were called upon to shed, were dropt over the grave of Amy's child; but the smiles and caresses of a little Amy of their own, and the blessed feeling that they had indeed been as parents to the infant while it lived, spoke peace and consolation to their hearts.

William wrote to the elder Mr. Dalton, announcing the death of his grandchild, and some months afterwards he received an answer informing him that his unfortunate son had fallen a victim to the unwholesomeness of the climate, a few months after his arrival in India, and that by his will lately received, it appeared that William and Alice were entitled to the sum of three thousand pounds, which, failing his infant daughter, he had bequeathed to them. With this sum they purchased the farm of Billstane glen, which had been rented only by John Gray; and as Mrs. Gray did not long survive her grandchild, they were also left the sole possessors of her little property. Thus they had enough of this world's wealth; but their richest blessing was still in the love of each other, and in the smiles of a happy, a pious, and a thriving family.

THE RENOUNCED TREASURE.

TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM HOWITT, FROM THE SWEDISH OF NICANDER.

In the heart of Rome, not far from the palace of San Marco, lies a great and venerable building, darkened by age, but with walls which seem to defy time, and to be calculated for eternity. The simple, unadorned architecture augments the solemn impression which the very mass awakes in and for itself. Like the rest of the Roman palaces, it stands forth largest and proudest in the moonlight. Its enclosed situation causes that it almost always stands in the shade, or seems to shroud itself in a mystical gigantic gloom, while all the surrounding and more gay churches and palaces are brightly lit up. The building is called the Collegio Romano, and is at present the residence of the Jesuit order.

Massive as the palace is, it yet partakes the fate of all other buildings; it must be repaired that it may not by degrees fall to ruin. Its enormous extent, and the multitude of rooms which it contains, the greater part of which are inhabited by the members, adepts, and pupils of the Order, or serve as depositories for the Order's archives, treasury, library, and similar purposes, induce the necessity of a constant inspection, and almost equally constant repairs. Few months elapse without workmen being there on some account, joinering, painting, building, or plastering.

One day in August 1828 a bricklayer, Antonio Dossi, living in the neighbourhood of Maria Sopra Minerva, was sent for to begin and complete in haste a job for the holy order of Jesuits. The bricklayer, a man of merit, and burning with a desire to recommend himself to so influential and powerful a community, hastened immediately to the Collegio Romano, followed by two trusty journeymen. One of the subordinate brothers of the Order conducted the bricklayer into the second story, and showed him two adjoining rooms, the one large, and the other small, but which had no communication with each other. The larger one had shortly before been the private library of an eminent deceased brother of the Order, and had fallen to his successor. The intention now was that the bricklayer should not only pull down all the old drawing in this room, but should, for the greater accommodation of the new occupant, open a door between the two rooms, and in the best manner replaster and embellish them. Antonio bound himself within a given time and for a reasonable price to accomplish the business.

The young Jesuit withdrew, and in the empty room which had been ready cleared of furniture, the bricklayers immediately set to work with their hammers and picks. Antonio himself attacked in the lesser room the wall which separated it from the adjoining large saloon, and had with him one of the journeymen. The other journeyman began in the first place to rip off the old paper, and hew down the old drawing. One piece of drawing after another thus came tumbling down in both rooms; the floor was speedily covered with heaps of rubbish, and a thick, whirling dust of lime pothered around the

active workmen, who soon could not see, but merely hear one another. The hammer strokes, at first so active, became by degrees slower and lighter; finally the Roman workmen, according to their wont, rested frequently, and the nearer it approached to noon, the more the zeal for work abated, and left room for mutual time-killing gossip.

"Maestro Antonio," said Pietro, who worked by his side, "I would very gladly get out of this lime smoke some minutes before noon; for to-day, just as the clock strikes twelve, they begin to draw the numbers at the lottery on Monte Citorio. I hope that San Giuseppe will help me to a half or a third for the sake of my devotion. I have staked on number eight, because eight are the letters of San Giuseppe's name; on seven, because G is the seventh letter of the alphabet; and on fifteen, because seven and eight together make fifteen."

"Simpleton!" replied Antonio. "Once in my life I too put into the lottery: I won twelve scudi, and that put an end to all desire in me to put into lotteries. I had reckoned at least on winning two hundred."

"Maestro Antonio," now cried Tomaso, the other journeyman in the large room, here is something written on the wall that I cannot rightly make out."

Antonio, who was rather more at home in the art of "reading written" than his assistant, went to Tomaso, stalked bravely over the fallen paper, drew near to the wall, and read out, after some pondering, the following lines:

Multó mi piace,
Donna o Muro che tace.

They laughed aloud at the little rhymes, which certainly might have found a more befitting place then a Jesuit's College; but Antonio and his men began to hack on the wall, and knocked down without mercy even the stones which contained the rhyming lines.

But Antonio, while with vigorous strokes he assailed the wall just where the door should be opened, heard soon a peculiar sound, which was repeated as often as the blow fell on the same spot. Although he could not comprehend the real occasion of this sound, which resembled a slight vibration, yet he began to suspect, by reflection on the inscription, that possibly something particular might be concealed within the wall. He became more and more convinced of the reality of the sound, although neither of the men heard it, and resolved to have the inquiry into it all to himself.

"Pietro," said the master therefore to the journeyman who had desired it, "I will give the quarter which is yet wanting to twelve o'clock. Go to Monte Citorio, and hear what numbers are drawn by the white boy on the balcony, and contrive to win a good sum. Tomaso may go with thee. This Satan's pother must lay itself, or fume itself away. No poor sinner can well endure it longer. Go then to your dinners, and within an hour and half let us meet here again. I will merely cut away to the corner there; Monte Citorio, and thy numbers, I do not trouble myself about."

The two journeymen were not long in taking the master at his word, and disappearing. With more determined and vigorous strokes, he now thundered on the mysterious place, and heard distinctly not merely a vibration, but an actual jingling within the wall. A large stone fell out, and in the opening there appeared a little black slide. "Aha!" thought Antonio, as he set his gray cap, powdered with the white lime, on one side, "Aha! here is some walled up treasure." In the greatest haste, he made a cross on his breast, and hesitated in his excitement for three seconds, whether he should open the slide or not. He set a chisel into the joint-crack! a stroke with the hammer, the slide flew open, and down before Antonio's feet streamed an amazing number of solid gold zecchins.

Antonio stood for some moments speechless, contemplating the falling shower of gold. If some one of the reverend fathers had chanced to enter, the bricklayer had certainly lifted his cap, and related the whole affair, without making the slightest claim to a single one of the dainty gold coins. Yes! he almost wished that some one might come in and see them. But he continued alone, all was silent in the great palace. Without waiting long to consider, he gathered all the zecchins into his spacious pocket, which had hitherto never carried any thing beyond silver coinage, or bajocchi, and occasionally half eaten rolls, or fruit. To balance the gold coins, and prevent them betraying themselves and him by too distinct a jingle, he filled his pockets out with fine rubbish, annihilated every trace of the secret box in the wall, and with an air as if nothing had occurred, he descended the steps as with the intention of betaking himself home to his young wife, and with her to partake a good and yet frugal dinner.

Had he now met some of the brethren of the Order, and they had happened to fix on him a sharp look, it is very probable that he would have changed colour, and would have given up the zecchins in order to come with a whole skin out of the game. But he met no one; only on the bottom step sat two young Jesuits, who were passing through the last stages of their period of probation in humility, and now, in the presence of some curious Romans, and two or three curious English, sat eating with four crippled tatterdemalions from the Sabine buildings.

Antonio greeted in passing the two humble young Jesuits, who still more graciously returned the greeting, but with downcast eyes, and wholly absorbed therein, went on with their love feast. Unobserved, and with a lighter heart, he came out into the street, took a long wind past the Pantheon, and gulped down all fear and anxiety in a good draught of aqua vitæ, which, in one of the corner shops near the Piazza della Rotonda, was offered to him by the friendly host. All now became so light before his eyes, and so comfortable in his bosom; with a proud step, and twinkling eyes, he walked humming along the direct way to his own house.

He entered into the great vaulted room in the gallery, where he found his young, black-eyed wife Bettina in the utmost comfort, sitting by the long table, and at some distance from her a strange man in a brown coat, with curly hair, and dark features. Antonio soon recognized in the man an old acquaintance, namely, one of those acquaintances who frequently fasten themselves on an honest fellow, who cannot, by fair means, get rid of him. This fellow's name was Teodoro Pistrelli, but he was often called in jest, and in reference to his uncommon bodily strength, il Toro, the bull. He had been a butcher, but became bankrupt, and stood now in a secret but close connexion with the pope's favourite, the apothecary Fumirolli. Many confidently believed that he was the head of Fumirolli's spy-troop, and that it was he in particular who made the greatest and most profitable attacks on the smugglers in the markets of Ancona, Rimini, and Sinigaglia. By virtue of an inborn and perhaps genteel portion of impudence, he insinuated himself almost every where, and sought, by all possible means, to come into closer acquaintance with men and women in their houses, so that he might thereby be able to gain the slightest advantage for himself and his plans.

The moment Antonio entered the door, the handsome Bettina sprang forwards to meet him, gave him a kiss, and began immediately to set out his dinner. Teodoro had fixed with himself to dine to-day with Antonio, and therefore waited for no invitation, but seated himself, when he had greeted Antonio, and attacked a certain steaming dish piled with boiled triglier, a kind of little fish, resembling smelt, and filled his glass from the flask of Velletri wine.

Antonio, who, on many accounts, was by no means pleased with the presence of this self-invited guest, kept silence like a good child; and only by the haste with which he swallowed some warm fishes, and for company sent after them some deep draughts from the bottle, allowed it to be seen that any thing restless was at work within his breast, or that any thing unusual had happened. He seemed to have a vehement desire to speak, but did not bring out a syllable. He ate his soup hot as it came out of the pot, while Teodoro sat and blew every spoonful, and occasionally cast side glances at Antonio. As the dinner was concluded by a dish of roasted chestnuts, and the two men despatched this also without much talk, Bettina sung a little song, as she cleared away the dishes and plates; but it produced no great effect. By degrees they began to talk of the weather, and court, and of the last bull-fight in the Mausoleum of Augustus, and the like matters.

Teodoro arose when he had emptied his glass, took his hat, and said, "Brother Antonio, a word with you. I want to ask you a favour; I am in a little difficulty. Can you lend me ten scudi for a few weeks?"

"Hem!" said Antonio, and scratched his head. "You know that I am a poor devil, and that I seldom have more than is necessary for the day; and to-day, per Bacco! I could not lend to my own brother ten bajocchi; but, never mind, another day—to-morrow, or the day after, I will try what I can do. I shall then receive a little money. Come again then, and we shall see. To-day, I have the very devil in my head. I am very sorry, but just now it is impossible!"

Thereupon, for the sake of politeness, he begged his guest to sit down, and drink another glass or two; but Teodoro nodded coldly, twisted his hat into a variety of strange shapes, looked gloomy, bit his lips, and marched out of doors, without saying goodbye to host or hostess.

Scarcely was he out, when Antonio sprang to the door, and bolted it fast on the inside.

Bettina, already amazed at the usually calm and friendly man's impatient looks and gestures, turned pale with terror, flew to a distant corner, and demanded with trembling lips, "What ails thee, Antonio? What dost thou mean?"

"Hush! hush!" said Antonio, solemnly.

But Bettina's eyes began to glisten with tears, and she demanded again, "Antonio! what is the matter? Thou art not surely jealous of me, because of the unthankful Teodoro? I could not help it, that he came and sat himself down while thou wert away. Hear me, and be reasonable, Antonio?"

"Ah! such foolish prate!" said Antonio. "Here is something else to be done, than to be jealous. Now we are alone. Wilt thou see, Bettina?" And with this word, Antonio emptied by handfuls, his gold out on the table.

At this, Bettina fell into another kind of terror, which was at the same time mingled with a tolerable portion of amazement and curiosity. With large eyes she contemplated now Antonio, and now the money; and, while he took one handful of glittering zecchins after another, and piled them on the table, into a great heap, she exclaimed with vehemence, "Oh, Santa Madonna! Antonio, hast thou stolen them?"

"No, Bettina; but hush, say I. Don't scream, and so shalt thou hear all. All these golden zecchins have I hit upon in the Collegio Romano. They almost came down my throat as I struck the wall. But I repent already that I took them. I could not resist the temptation to bring them home and show them to my Bettina; but this very day I will go and put them back again."

"Ah, sweet Antonio!" exclaimed Bettina, as she cautiously approached the table. "What a brave heap of gold! And thou hast really not stolen it, but found it in a wall? Yes, certainly ought thou to return the money, if any one wanted it; but perhaps no living soul knows any thing of it, or assuredly they would have taken good care not to leave them lying in a wall which might be pulled down. Be silent a while, I exhort thee, Antonio. See if any one asks after the zecchins; and if not, thou art a rich man. Thou canst purchase a vineyard here; or we can go to Naples, where my father lives, and buy us a little house, and live happily; and I will become grand, and drive every Sunday on the Toledo, and thou shalt see, Antonio, thou wilt see how all the gentlemen will lift their hats, and inquire how you do, and how thy Bettina does; and thou wilt thank them politely, and invite thy friends home to take a glass of Greek wine. Nay, sweet Antonio! keep the lovely money a while. If any one miss them, he will speedily inquire after them, and then thou canst return them. But how many zecchins hast thou fallen on? Let us count them!"

Now followed a whole chapter of caresses and protestations, after which the zecchins were counted, and were found to amount to seven hundred and ninety-five. By Bettina's advice, Antonio deposited his treasure in a strong chest, furnished with a strong lock, and he then pored night and day over his wealth. His heart beat with anxiety every morning that he betook himself to the Collegio Romano; and every time that a Jesuit paid him a visit in the room where he was at work, he dreaded to hear the startling address,—"Villain! where are the zecchins?" In the mean time, he proceeded with zeal, and speedily completed his job to the satisfaction of the Jesuits. He received his stipulated payment. No one had the least conception of the matter; no one asked him the slightest question.

So passed over two weeks; and Antonio became thinner and thinner, through mere care. Before, in his poverty, he had been gay and joyous. The golden treasure lay almost untouched under lock and key. *Almost*, for five or six zecchins had been taken out to pay off some pressing debts, and to buy some little ornamental articles for Bettina. Teodoro never came again to borrow his ten scudi.

The 39th of August was a lovely day. The festival of Santa Rosa was celebrated in the Minerva church, and Antonio went thither Amid the throng of worshippers, he made his way into the saint's chapel, which blazed with burning wax lights, painted with varied colours, and cast himself on his knees before the richly-adorned image of the Madonna. It was the same image before which Santa Rosa, in her lifetime, was accustomed to perform her devotions. A Dominican stood by the altar in his mass attire. It was Father Silvestro, the most eloquent and handsomest of all the brethren of the Order; tall in stature, still in the fresh prime of life, but pale with his strict attention to his sacred duties. His voice sounded deep and solemnly. When he elevated the host, he looked a more than earthly being; and his eyes glowed so piercingly, that it seemed as if nothing could be concealed from

them. As Antonio now looked up towards the Dominican's reverence-inspiring countenance, and thence on the glittering image of the Virgin, there fell a flaming taper, and burned him on the hand. Silvestro looked sharply at Antonio. Antonio lay on his knee, confused, trembling, and humiliated. As soon as mass was over, he staggered home.

Antonio slept not a wink during the night. The following morning, as Father Silvestro sat in the confessional, a sinner approached with downcast eyes, fell on his knees at the lattice, and whispered, after a deep sigh, into the Dominican's ear, "Father, pardon! I have sinned deeply. I am the bricklayer, Antonio Dossi. In the Jesuit's palace I found a hidden treasure, seven hundred zecchins and ninety. For these fourteen days I have wickedly concealed my discovery; but nothing or little of it is dissipated. I will deliver all up, and free my soul; but I dare not myself advance into the presence of the strange Jesuit fathers, without some mediator. Father! do thou tell them the wrong that I have done, but will now repair. Before thee I dared to unburden my heart. Thou art good and kind, and will not deal hardly with me and my poor Bettina!"

Father Silvestro sat, after listening to this confession, for some minutes in silence, and thoughtful. "My son!" said he, at length, "thy faith has saved thee, and thy repentance will atone for thy fault. Tell me all, and I will free thy heart from its sinful burden."

With a much relieved bosom, Antonio related all the particulars of his golden adventure. When he had concluded, and still continued on his knees, as if awaiting his final doom, Father Silvestro lightly touched his head with his snow-white hand, and said, "Peace be with them in whose heart is no guile. Be still and discreet. Tell no one what thou hast revealed to me. When I have reflected and acted, I will visit thee in thy house. Go in the peace of the Lord!"

Antonio kissed, through the lattice, the priestly hand, bowed, and went. Before the wonderful image of the Madonna, he again fell on his knees for a while, crossed himself on the breast, and, as he now read pardon and kindness in the looks of the Holy Virgin, and the peace of the church fell on him so still and warmly, he became much composed in his spirit. More joyous than when he carried home the golden heap from the Collegio Romano, he now bore with him from the church the certainty of getting rid of his burden; and Bettina wondered, at dinner, at the unusual heartiness with which he threw his arms round her and kissed her.

Soon after Antonio's departure, Father Silvestro also quitted the church; but walked long to and fro in the colonnade, which, on the four sides of the inner court, surrounded a little pleasant garden. Sometimes he went out into the garden, stood before a rich and luxuriant stand of flowers, bound carefully up a fallen branch, and lopped off here and there from the orange trees some withered twigs. He then shut himself up in his cell; and it was not till evening that he appeared in his festive black-and-white Dominican costume, and with a fine, large, and overshadowing hat on his trimmed head, passed through the convent gate, and directed his course towards the Collegio Romano.

To see a Dominican monk within a Jesuit's palace gate, is just as rare as to find magpies in a raven's nest. The Jesuits and the Dominicans, the most learned and accomplished of the brethren of the Catholic Orders, were, even from the earliest period, if not sworn foes, yet decided rivals, who met each other with a cold pride: the former priding themselves on their wealth, their crafty heads, and wide-extended influence; the latter on the consciousness of their classical learning, their purer manners and intentions. The deep-rooted aversion was now perhaps greater than ever, because the reigning pope, Leo XII. without altogether neglecting the Dominicans, yet embraced the Jesuit brethren with a too fatherly preference, whom he regarded as his and the Church's most devoted children and most stanch pillars, and on whom he, both in and out of Italy, showered wealth and testimonies of his favour. Between the two Orders, indeed, as between their individual members, there was practised an outward dignified politeness; but seldom did a Jesuit stand in a close and familiar connexion with a Dominican, and never were they accustomed to visit each other, if not compelled thereto by peremptory duty. It raised, therefore, no little observation, as Father Silvestro entered the Jesuits' college, and desired on particular business to see, not the General of the Order himself, for he lay ill, but the worthy Father Gregorio, who had assumed the management of the affairs of the Order of Jesuits in Rome.

"Peace be with thee, Father Silvestro, the holy Dominican Order's ornament and honour," said the polite and complacent

Father Gregorio, who recognized the Dominican, as Father Silvestro reverently yet with dignity advanced to greet him. Gregorio arose, advanced three steps to meet him, pressed lightly his hand with two fingers, and showed him a seat, as he again resumed his own.

A fine and friendly smile now played on the lips of the dignified Jesuit, while he turned about a beautifully worked gold snuff-box in his fingers. Before Silvestro could utter a word, he continued,—"The brotherly affection and the concord which prevail between our holy Orders and their individual members, as well as the friendship which for a long time thou hast kindly professed for me, brother Silvestro, were, in themselves sufficient to explain the occasion of uncommon pleasure which thou givest me at this moment; yet it would be flattering myself were I to believe that thou art come hither merely to see and commune with an old friend. If thou art therefore in any weighty trouble, either on thy own or thy brethren's account, confide it to me. Thou shalt find in me a friend zealous to serve thee, if thou wilt speak to me as a brother."

Silvestro now began, in sustained seriousness and without embarrassment, to state the occasion of his visit. "Worthy father," said he, "thy friendly and obliging words admonish me of my duty to speak openly: thy valuable time reminds me to speak concisely. I am not come hither to seek or to ask any thing for my brethren or myself. We have, God be praised, enough, and require little. But as the humble servant of the Reconciler am I come to entreat thee to deal gently with a misguided and repentant Christian, who has sinned against thee and the venerable society of the holy Ignatius, and who has put his fate into my hands. But—before I tell thee his name and his offence, promise me, worthy Father Gregorio, not to use thy power over the sinner's welfare otherwise than by a gentle forgiveness, for I assure thee that he, as far as in a Christian lies, shall make good his failing."

"Am I then held to be so hard a wielder of the vengeance of the law," said the Jesuit, "that thou art obliged to place thy word as a cushion between me and the culprit?"

"Not so, not so," answered the Dominican; "but severity is frequently the judge's duty: but when the culprit converts himself into the contrite, then first can we hope to speak to his judge's heart; and as he has not dared to speak for himself, I have ventured to speak for him. Promise, therefore, Father Gregorio, to be lenient towards him."

"*I* shall and will not be severe with him: there hast thou my promise," said the Jesuit.

"Nor any other *through* thee?" added Silvestro, calmly.

"No, no, no!" exclaimed Gregorio, as impatiently he took three pinches out of his box, one after another.

Father Silvestro now related to the listening Jesuit the whole confession of Antonio at the confessional; but for sufficient reasons, and not to imbitter him, he made no mention of the inscription found by the bricklayer on the wall. During the relation, which he made with a simple eloquence, he fixed his eyes now and then steadily on Father Gregorio's face, to trace the impression of anger, astonishment, or joy, which his communication might excite; but not the slightest change was visible in the Jesuit's countenance, which at the conclusion of the narrative remained as friendly and unconstrained as before the commencement.

"Brother Silvestro," said Gregorio, as Silvestro ceased to speak, "I now ask thee whether *thou* wilt pardon the sinner?"

"Whom? I? Why should I not pardon him?"

"Because from thy judgment he has the most to dread. He has mocked thee!"

"Mocked! Nay, brother Gregorio! The man has before God confided to me in the confessional the truth."

"Listen, Brother Silvestro!" resumed Gregorio, without warmth, but with glistening eyes. "Listen to me; observe me well first, and read my countenance, to convince thyself that I am calm, and then listen. Thou art misled. The singular story which thou relatest, I know not whether more to despise or resent. A workman find a treasure within these walls! Nay, brother! I defy all the bricklayers in the world, here, in the abode of world-renouncing poverty and silent contemplation, and in the solitary cell of a poor but honoured departed brother Jesuit, to find worldly wealth. Is not our Order recently reawakened from a violent death to a dawning life, and still, by men of the world, misunderstood and persecuted? Is not our house a house of prayer, where we put up our petitions for worldly poverty and heavenly riches? Wander not our brethren round the world, battling with the evil spirit of the age, abhorred as circumcised Israelites, and held in as little regard as the first apostles of the Holy Church, because they preach

against the world's vanity and corruption? Have they, indeed, any hope but in a happy death, after a blameless, but a tried and painful pilgrimage; and seldom hearing out of the mouths of men any other word, than '*Crucify them! crucify them!*' And here, at the stroke of a bricklayer's hammer, gold shall stream out of walls and ceilings? Silvestro! did I not know thy high and Christian virtues, thy honourable calling and great reputation, I should be tempted to say that thou came to mock me, or for something still worse. But thou, thyself, through thy great integrity, art misled. Even the noblest may be too precipitate, and the most sagacious may be imposed upon. Thy Antonio is either a knave or a fool."

"Neither, Father Gregorio!" answered Silvestro. "A knave would have retained the gold which he found and no one missed. A fool does not speak so clearly and so sensibly as Antonio to-day spoke to me."

"Be it with him as God and our Lady will!" said the Jesuit. "But thou mayest see thyself, that here, in this our cell, is found no flowing vein of gold. Leave the man alone; or let him undergo a legal inquiry, or send him to the hospital of the Holy Ghost: from us he has stolen nothing. Cordial thanks, brother Silvestro, for thy good intentions and thy trouble."

The Dominican arose with a warmth which betrayed displeasure, and would go. But Gregorio, who had bethought himself a moment, said again. "Wait a while, brother, if it be not unpleasant to thee;" and at the same time he seized the bell handle and rung. There immediately entered an attendant Order's-brother, who awaited at the door the commands of his exalted superior.

"Call hither Angelo and Luigi!" said Gregorio. Soon after there stood in the room two young Order's-brethren, with pale but handsome and expressive countenances and downcast eyes. Gregorio gave them a look as they made their humble greeting, and then began to play with his gold-box, and asked:—

"You have both of you lately seen here a bricklayer, Antonio Dossi, who has been doing some work for the Holy Order?"

"Yes! most reverend Father!" replied they both.

"Have you always found the man to be of sound and perfect understanding?" demanded Gregorio, and gave the interrogated Jesuits another look.

"To judge by speech and action, he resembled rather a crazy person than a sane one," answered Angelo. "He frequently trembled, as if seized with a sudden tremor, when I entered the room to see how he was getting on with his work. Sometimes he sung, or laughed wildly without any visible cause."

"He once seized me fast about the neck as if he would strangle me," said Luigi, "and put his mouth to my ear; but I reprimanded him for his impropriety, and said, 'Antonio, take heed that you don't do what you may repent;' and on that he let me go, saying, 'You are right, young Father! we should do nothing that we may here repent of;' and then he laughed wildly and long."

On this, Gregorio looked significantly at the Dominican, and demanded of the two Jesuits, "So, then, you imagine this Antonio to have lost his wits?"

"Yes, most reverend Father," answered Luigi; "if Providence, since that time, has not been merciful to him, he is, at this hour, not rightly in his senses."

"That is true," added Angelo; and, at a sign from Gregorio, the two Jesuits withdrew with a deep obeisance.

"What think you now, Brother Silvestro?" exclaimed Gregorio, as soon as they were alone.

"I think that I have fulfilled my duty; that I need not, and ought not to go farther in this matter. I shall, therefore, tell Antonio that he may keep his zecchins, for that the Collegio Romano will not receive them as its property."

"God and the holy Ignatius preserve us," interrupted the Jesuit, "from the possession of this and all other wrongly acquired goods. Let the holder answer it to himself and to God how it got into his possession, and how he applies it. See! there you have my first and last word on the subject."

"Forget, then, what I have said, and pardon the interruption of my visit," said Silvestro, as he took his hat and advanced to the Jesuit, to take his leave. "Farewell, Father Gregorio! God's peace! Farewell, farewell!"

"Farewell, father Silvestro!" said Gregorio. "Thy visit has been flattering and dear to me. God grant that thou one day mayest come hither on such an errand, that by word and deed I may be able to testify how highly I esteem thee. I shall include thee in my prayers, as certainly as I hope that thou wilt not forget me in thine."

With this, Gregorio arose from his chair, took Silvestro by the hand, and accompanied

him to the door. Yes, he would have gone further with him, had not Silvestro protested against it, and closed the door, saying, "Thanks, thanks! Father Gregorio! Give yourself no farther trouble. Adieu, adieu!"

"*Dio ti benedica!*" was heard as a parting salutation from the Jesuit's room. The Dominican flung his hat on his burning head, as he now advanced alone out of the corridor, and gave vent, in a long sigh, to his suppressed indignation. When he reached the gate, he shook the dust from his feet, and said, "Sycophants! hypocrites! Should I ever become like you, then for the next time will I set my foot within these walls."

Father Silvestro did not return immediately to his convent, but went to Antonio. As the latter became aware of the approach of his venerable confessor, he sprang to the door, and, with bows and kisses of the hand, bade him welcome. The Dominican greeted Antonio gently, took a chair, and said seriously, but calmly, "Antonio! thou hast not deceived me? Thou hast found seven hundred and ninety-five zecchins in the Jesuits' College?"

"God, and the Madonna, and the holy Antonio, whose name I poor sinner bear, preserve me from lying and deceit," answered Antonio, with astonishment.

"Let me see the money," said Silvestro, as he himself arose to close the door, and looked around the room as if he feared the presence of some improper witness. But they were quite alone even at this time: Bettina was not within.

"Yes, most worthy Father!" said Antonio. "All shalt thou see, every penny, except the five zecchins which I changed away, but which I will soon earn again. Rather will I remain poor, and seek my bread with labour and care, than possess what does not belong to me;" and with this he conducted the Dominican to the secret chest, raised the lid, and showed him that the zecchins actually lay there, protesting, once more, that all had occurred exactly as he had stated in the confessional.

"Thou art right, Antonio!" said Silvestro, "I was quite convinced that thou wert neither a knave nor a fool. But see thou, the Jesuit Fathers will not acknowledge the treasure that thou hast found. They deny it. Keep, therefore, what fortune has thrown in thy way, and be from this moment as free from remorse, as thou art free from guilt. *Now* art thou pure. I award to thee this glittering gold as the gift of Providence. Let it be expended for good and noble purposes, for the benefit of thyself and thy fellow-men. But thou must now preserve thy secret. Dangers encompass thee. Good night! Before morning dawns I will see thee again, or send thee a messenger. And that which I counsel thee, thou must do. I will pray for thee as for a son; thy welfare lies at my heart. Farewell! God bless thee!"

And before Antonio was able to stammer out his reverential gratitude, Father Silvestro had vanished.

"*Corpo di Bacco!*" exclaimed Antonio, after he had sat some moments as if petrified; but at length the thought of the wonderful find comes with a sense of how glad he was. "*Corpo di Bacco!* Now I am rich. Bettina, Bettina, come quickly. Ah! thou abominable Bettina, if thou didst but know, how thou wouldst come!"

Bettina soon came home. A great part of the night, the happy couple spent in talk over their good fortune, and in plans and castles in the air for the future. Already the cock crew; already rattled along the Via dell Corso the wagons pouring in from the country, while hoarse voices cried—"Aquavite! Aquavite!" when Antonio and Bettina fell asleep, and continued the building of their splendid air castles in their dreams.

The night after St. Egidius's day, which was the 1st of September there was a loud knocking at the gate of the house in which Antonio lived. The neighbours heard the hard knocking, and, as no one opened the door, here and there was protruded a head from the windows of the adjoining house, to see what was the matter. In the street stood three gensdarmes, one of whom at length shouted with a rough bass voice—"Antonio Dossi! open the door! In the name of the Ministers of Justice, I command thee open!"

There was then opened, not the door, but a little window into the street, an old head with its night-cap was thrust out of it, and demanded with a tone which issued half through the mouth, and half through the nose, "Signori, may I ask whom you are in quest of?"

"We seek the bricklayer, Antonio Dossi," said the principal of the gensdarmes.

"Then you come—let me see,—then you come exactly ten hours too late, Signori! Antonio and his wife are now, God will! already beyond the Pontine Marshes; or indeed they are at La Storta, if they travelled north, or at Subiaco, if they took an easterly direction. Enough, Signori! they have, like Christian people, honourably paid their rent,

and are gone hence. Adieu! excuse me, Signori!" and with that the old man shut to the window.

"Open, baldpate!" now bawled the corporal: "Antonio is my prisoner. Open, or I will knock in the gate!"

Before this menace could be carried into effect, the gate growled upon its hinges, and the gensdarmes entered.

The whole house was now searched through. The old host bade the soldiers look everywhere; and when they had at length convinced themselves of the fruitlessness of all this trouble, and grumbling, were about to depart, then advanced the old man, and said politely, and smilingly, "Signori! excuse me, that I put one single question to you: By what authority are you come hither to disturb the nightly repose of me and mine? What have I or my family to do with the officers of justice?"

The corporal produced his written order to take and commit to prison the bricklayer, *Antonio Dossi*, charged by *Teodoro Pistrelli* with a robbery. With spectacles on nose, and by the light of a bright brass lamp, Antonio's host read the high commands of the *Buon Governo*, the Good Ruler, and said coldly and shortly, as he returned the warrant, "Signori! I cannot understand how Signor Teodoro can all at once have become so rich, that he can let some hundreds of zecchins be stolen from him; but this I know, that Antonio Dossi is no thief, but an honest fellow; and that he is now no longer to be found here, ought to be properly inquired into. *Signori! il mio rispetto:*" and with that he lighted the servants of justice out of doors, yes, even out of the gate, which he carefully barred; and the gensdarmes set out on their way back through a great crowd, which in the meantime had collected, and which at their departure accompanied them with a loud burst of laughter.

It is now incumbent that we briefly explain the occasion not only of this nocturnal visit, but of Antonio's sudden flight. Teodoro Pistrelli, who would not go again to Antonio to borrow the money, had nevertheless watched secretly for an opportunity, in the absence of the gruff husband, to seek Bettina, and to gather up from her, if not money, at least some useful particulars touching her husband, and the singular state of mind in which he found Antonio at his last visit. He would not apply to Antonio himself with farther solicitations or questions, for fear that he might get the stab of a knife for his answer; for that the man was horribly jealous, both his self-love, and his base intentions persuaded him. Often, in the evenings, did he stand on the watch in the neighbourhood of the bricklayer's dwelling, in the hope of seeing Antonio go out when Bettina was in, or to see Bettina come home while Antonio was away. But fate had not favoured his wishes, till one evening he saw the Dominican monk Silvestro, as he had just returned from the Jesuits' college, enter the room in which Antonio lived, and close the door after him.

Teodoro crept as close to the door as he could, laid his ear to it, and gathered, with his fine organs of hearing, the greater part of the conversation between the monk and Antonio. Before Father Silvestro again opened the door, Teodoro had disappeared out of the gateway, and hastened to his powerful patron, the Apothecary Fumarolli, to lighten his heart, and with him to contrive a plan conducive both to his thirst for vengeance and his cupidity. Fumarolli listened attentively to Teodoro's relation; and before Pistrelli could get out the last word, he had a plan already in his head, through which he hoped, in a double fashion, to benefit the holy Jesuits' College, and equally to advance his own interest. In the first place, he would manœuvre the treasure, which the Jesuits had refused, back into their hands, when he had taken care first to levy a handsome per centage upon it for his own and his assistants' benefit; and in the second, he would deeply humiliate Father Silvestro, and in him the whole Dominican Order so detested by the Jesuits.

Fumarolli did not linger long at home, but betook himself to the Collegio Romano, and got admission to Father Gregorio. There he found, however, that all his haste was needless; and that his whole artful scheme lay before his arrival quite prepared in the more artful Jesuit's brain. The fruit of this confidential interview was the already described order of the city magistrate to seize Antonio, who was charged with having stolen the gold from Teodoro Pistrelli. Indefatigable in his zeal to injure another and to enrich himself, hastened Fumarolli from the Jesuits' College to the Vatican; where in the Pope's cabinet, in the company of a favoured few, he frequently passed the evenings, and sometimes, yes nearly as often, sped the time with playing at cards. It is said in Rome that the holy Father carried his weakness for the unworthy favourite so far, that he himself honoured this company with his exalted

presence, though no one dared to assert that he took the cards in hand. As Fumarolli now entered the cabinet, and found the Pope in a humour very favourable to his designs, he did not delay to avail himself of it. He described in his usual, and occasionally bluff and cunning manner, Silvestro's visit to the Jesuit Gregorio, as it had been related to him by the latter, probably with necessary additions, and represented the proceeding of the Dominican in such a light that the Pope was seized with the most violent rage, and swore by St. Peter's keys that Silvestro should dearly atone for his shameful attempt to cast a stain on the Order of the Jesuits, so distinguished for its services to both church and state.

The Pope laid it so deeply to heart, and chafed himself so about it, that in the night he was seized with one of his periodical attacks of gout, and for some days was in actual danger, till the united exertions of physician and apothecary placed him in an apparent, but yet from day to day declining state of health.

Father Silvestro, although ignorant of all these plottings, had nevertheless foreseen with a foreboding bordering on certainty, that the Jesuits' Order, which would not openly acknowledge the discovered treasure, would despise no secret means of getting it into its power, and therefore, that Antonio could no longer be secure in Rome. When he had, after his last conversation with Antonio, in his cell in the silence of night, reflected on what was best to be done, he rose early in the morning, wrote a short but affectionate and cordial letter to his friend, the Dominican Lorenzo, in Naples; and procured, through his high standing, a passport for the bricklayer and his wife from the Governor of Rome; for he had not yet been anticipated by the Jesuits or Fumarolli, who, through the Pope's sudden illness, was for the moment engrossed by weighter cares. Silvestro then hastened to Antonio and Bettina, and warned them, with all expedition, to put their affairs in order, and with all their easily moveable effects to get themselves over the borders of the Roman state, and into the kingdom and city of Naples. At the same time, he delivered to them the letter which he had prepared, and commanded them, on their arrival in the strange city, to commit themselves entirely to the counsel and guidance of the noble Father Lorenzo. He commended them to God's protection, wished them a happy journey, and returned to his cloister.

Before two o'clock on the 1st of September, husband and wife were already without the gate of St. Giovanni, on the way to Naples, having left the greater part of their effects behind in Rome, to avoid attracting observation; but the important hoard of gold they had not forgotten.

Seven days after Antonio and Bettina's departure, wandered Father Silvestro, clad in his most ornate robes, and attended by a servant, past the deserted dwelling of the fugitives. Then he lifted a warm glance towards heaven, grateful for the beautiful lot to which heaven had called him, to be a father to the innocent and the persecuted, even at the sacrifice of himself. The happy escape and reward of Antonio might be read in his mild and glorified features; and yet there stood before him in the next moment a severe trial; and he knew it.

Silvestro was called to the presence of the Pope, and was now on his way to the Vatican. It was eleven o'clock before noon of Trinitá dè Monti, that is, sixteen o'clock, according to the Italian mode of reckoning time, as he ascended the splendid steps amid Swiss guards, and stood in one of the eleven thousand halls of the Vatican palace.

Here he did not wait long, for Leo XII., punctual himself, and precise in ceremonies and small matters, seldom allowed any one to wait on him.

Just as the folding-doors of the holy Father's cabinet were flung open by a sable-clad valet, and the Dominican, conducted by one of the officers in waiting of the Noble-guard, with a silent but a firm step trod the rich gobelin carpet of the cabinet, there flitted, like an evil genius, a black figure past, with a shameless countenance, and disappeared at a side-door. It was the Apothecary Fumarolli.

The holy Father himself sate at a distance in the cabinet, in a golden chair. He was clad in a white robe, reaching to the feet; but wore on his shoulders the purple velvet collar, bordered with swan's-down, and on his head the white calotte, from beneath which a few thin gray hairs projected, and formed about the ears some scanty locks. His countenance, pale as his dress but much sallower, seemed nearly devoid of life; but the thin, pale-blue lips trembled still, as if with inward rage. The right hand, white as ivory, and adorned by the beaming fisher's ring, rested on a table of polished black gold-veined marble, where some papers were scattered about, with which the fingers played.

Father Silvestro feil upon his knees with his head reverentially bared, and with

clasped hands. Thus remained he some seconds.

"Thou art Silvestro, the Dominican? Come nearer," said Leo, with a trembling tongue, and in a voice scarcely audible.

"Holy Father, I am he!" answered Silvestro; raised himself, advanced some steps, and again fell down, kissing the Pope's right foot, whose purple slipper, with its golden cross, appeared from beneath the long white robe.

"Judas!" exclaimed the Pope, and a momentary flush of red flamed up in his cold and withered cheeks, but quickly faded again into a pale hue of death, like that which covers the Alps when the evening red vanishes. "Judas! dost thou betray the Head of the Church, and thy Lord, with a kiss?" and at the same instant, he drew his foot beneath his mantle. "Thou answerest nothing: thou art silent?"

"Holy Father," said Silvestro, "when thou speakest, it becomes thy servant to be silent; and, if thou addressest me in thy wrath, I can only be dumb and abased."

"I know you, ye black and white monks! Ye would undermine and destroy your own mother, the holy Church, which I protect and govern. Ye would devour me, who yet, like the pelican, open my own bosom for you. But see! I will scourge you with my pinions, and I will keep you in check so long as my head remains above the earth. But," added he, with a slower, deeper tone, "would to God that I already lay dead and cold in the vault beneath St. Peter's, — I, the least and most unfortunate of all the successors of the first Apostles, — *ego, omnium Pontificum infimus et infelicissimus*. But thou," here he again elevated his voice, "thou art crafty with all thine humility, and I meant thee well."

But the Dominican said, when the Pope had ceased, "Here stand I to-day, as faithful as before, and without hypocrisy before your Holiness's throne. Be pleased to tell me, by what I have forfeited your favour, that I may be able to regain it in the way of truth."

"Thou knowest it — thou knowest it, monk!" burst out the Pope, with growing wrath — "thou knowest it well. We have not called thee hither, that thou mayest excuse thyself, and coil thyself again like an adder around our heart, but that thou mayest hear that we know thee. Thou hast spun a lie and a snare to cast ridicule and dirt on those whom thou oughtest to honour and love. Thou rememberest thy conversation with Gregorio, our faithful servant, and who might serve thee for an example. Thou recollectest well that thou accusedst our good Jesuit Order of base cupidity, and tauntedst them with concealed treasure. Thou art a knave — thou art a genuine Dominican — thou—"

"Judge me as your Holiness will; in this matter I am wholly absolved by my conscience. I have calumniated no one, cast reproach on no one. What I spoke was the truth," said Silvestro.

"Thy conscience is a knave, monk! It lies to thee, and thou believest it, and liest to us; when thou ought alone to be true to us, and to obey our commands. See here!" Leo now took up from the table with a trembling hand a paper. "Canst thou read this name? Read it aloud."

Silvestro took the extended paper from the Pope, and read calmly and distinctly all the names which it contained, and amongst them his own; whereupon the Pope hastily stretched out his hand, and took back the paper.

"Thou hast seen and read these names," said he. "All these we had proposed soon to grace with the Cardinal's purple; even thee, ungrateful one! but our eyes are now opened. We have called thee hither to see how we strike thee out of this honourable list of cardinals. Thy name shall not disgrace with its neighbourhood, theirs. As I now dash out thy name from this leaf, Silvestro, art thou from this hour excluded from our Apostolical favour. Write now the name of Gregorio in its place, of Gregorio whom thou hast calumniated and blackened. So mercifully do we avenge ourselves to-day!"

When the Dominican had again received the paper, and, as he was commanded, had written in the Jesuit's name, the Pope contemplated him with the most transpiercing look that he could assume; and when he could detect in Silvestro's countenance no sign of sorrow or dejection, he said, as he rolled up the paper, "Thou wilt be no Cardinal, during the reign of Leo XII. Go!"

Silvestro went. Silently and dignified as he came, he passed through the marble halls, and descended again the marble steps; and the feelings which possessed him, as in St. Peter's Square the beautiful, clear, Roman heaven vaulted itself above his head, were not inspired by sorrow or care, but by an inward satisfaction. He was glad to find himself again without the walls of the Vatican; and said to himself many times, on his

way to his peaceful cell in the Minerva Convent, "If I am no Cardinal, I am nevertheless a good Christian, and have done a good deed; and, if I do not clothe myself in a purple robe, I am still happy enough not to envy all those that will."

Silvestro went into his cell. He was the same at his return, as he was at his going out; equally mild, serious, and calm, and fulfilled his calling with the same unspotted integrity and zeal, as before. None of his brethren could from his behaviour or countenance, guess that he had lost a Cardinal's hat. Yet was Father Silvestro not without disquiet, not concerning himself and the disfavour into which he had fallen at the Pontifical court, but concerning the fate of the fugitives under his protection. Well did he know that they had happily escaped the first pursuit, and hoped, on good grounds, that they were no longer within the territories of the church; but the crafty and powerful enemies might yet possess means in their hands, even at a greater distance and in a foreign country, to pursue their victims. He knew too well the Jesuits, and the fine web of machinations with which they know how in secret to involve their prey, which they could not arrive at by open force. He knew, too, Fumarolli for a willing and effective work-tool for carrying out all profitable schemes.

But if Silvestro frequently feared every thing from their united power, he yet hoped almost equally often that Providence, the father of all success, would bless the steps which, in his littleness, he had taken to counteract and bring to nothing all wicked plots. Thus did he vibrate many days between hope and fear. Many a night did he watch in his cell by his gleaming lamp and his Bible, with quiet prayers and silent tears; and often, when he at length slumbered, did he again awake at the slightest sound, and with a beating heart fancied that some one knocked at the convent gate, and brought him a letter from Naples. How great, therefore was his joy, as one evening at the close of September, a Vetturino, with great boots, hanging locks, and a downright honest countenance, entered the convent gate, and desired to speak with Father Silvestro, whom himself he encountered.

Conducted by the monk into his cell, he greeted him as heartily as copiously from *Fra Lorenzo* of St. Domenico Maggiore in Naples; and drew forth a letter which he had carefully and faithfully concealed under his clothes. With beaming eyes, Silvestro read the clear and long-expected letter, while the Vetturino refreshed himself with a silver cup of the convent cellar's most excellent wine; but it was not till after he had delivered to the departing messenger his answer, written with a glowing heart, that he enjoyed in the re-perusal of the letter, in the peace of solitude and a pure conscience, his happiest hour. Fra Lorenzo's letter ran thus:—

"Naples and St. Dominico Maggiore.
Sept. 25th, 1828.

"Beloved Brother! *Antonio* and *Bettina*, through thy affectionate vigilance, escaped from a threatening danger, are happily arrived in Naples. I should certainly have written off earlier to thank thee, paternally and warmly, for the letter which they brought, and for the dear confidence that thou reposest in me; but I waited for the moment in which with full assurance I could say, they are arrived, free and happy.

"Now can I do that! So soon as Antonio and Bettina found me out, I easily influenced our Prior to allow them an asylum in the convent. There they lived some days concealed, protected by the convent's right of hospitality, but not without danger of being taken, if they ventured out; for already had the officers of police received a hint from Rome regarding the affair of the fugitives, and their slightest movements were watched. This could not, and ought not long to endure. I went to our Minister of State, Prince Luigi de Medici, who resembles his Tuscan ancestors, in that he loves learning and detests the hierarchical power; and I laid before him thy client's matter in the clearest light. This proceeding was crowned with such success, that, on the commands of the minister, all the inquiries of the police were stopped. Yes! Antonio and Bettina are already announced as Neapolitan citizens, and cannot be reached by the papal power. They have left the convent, and purchased a little neat charming house, with its adjoining vineyard, not far from Castel Sant' Elmo, and in the neighbourhood of an estate which belongs to Bettina's own relations.

"They flitted thither three days ago; and there I visited them this evening. Antonio seems to me honesty and piety itself, but he is also strong and active. Bettina is quite too handsome to be free from the weaknesses of her sex; but she is good, sensible, and sincere, and she has a gently and easily touched heart. There was wanting, as I to-day entered their dwelling, nothing but

thyself, beloved and honoured brother, to make their and my happiness complete. Antonio squeezed my hand, and said, 'Oh, that Father Silvestro were but a sinful mortal like myself, that I might be able to embrace him and say, Take all — it is thine! all which thou seest here hast thou given us, and more also. Be with us what thou wilt. Let us be thy house-folk, and serve thee all thy days. But he is a holy man, and needs not even our prayers. Bettina, Bettina, come hither.'

"The lovely woman approached modestly, while she put back from her pure brow the dark locks. Then fell they both on their knees at my feet,—I could not prevent it,—and they said, 'Father Lorenzo, pray to God with us that we may be thankful till death!' and I lifted my hand, trembling with emotion, and said, 'Lord, grant them thy fullest peace.'

"I remained till late in the evening with them, partaking their simple but tasteful supper, beneath the crown of a young palm, and surrounded by the branches of vines. I tasted the greatest enjoyment in their sincere affection, and rejoiced myself in their dawning domestic happiness. We talk much about thee. When I left their cottage, Antonio accompanied me a part of the way, and imparted to me his hope of ere long becoming a father. He said, if the child should be a son, it was the wish of both himself and Bettina, that he should be called *Silvestro;* that when both father and mother rejoiced in the child, they should be daily and hourly reminded of their deep obligations to thee.

"As I afterwards pursued my way alone to San Dominico, I could not avoid saying to myself, 'So, then, it was the fixed design of Providence, that even a Jesuit should contribute to the happiness of two human beings, although contrary to his wish, and after his death.'

"Brother, I thank God who has allowed me to become, in a small measure, instrumental in carrying out thy noble work, and who gave me a dear occasion yet more highly to love and honour thee. When spring clothes in its flowery garb our most beautiful neighbourhood, then pay a visit to Antonio and Bettina, and

"Thy faithful

"LORENZO."

If the noble Dominican be not now a Cardinal, he yet possesses this letter, which is dearer to him than all the Cardinal's diplomas in the world. If no purple of the Church covers his shoulders, he can nevertheless, when spring comes, travel to Naples, and behold on the cheeks of Antonio and Bettina, made happy by him, the purple of health and gratitude; and how much more precious is this purple to him!

THE MAID OF HONOUR.

BY MRS. GORE.

CHAPTER I.

> Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
> Shall never tremble. Hence, horrible shadow!
> Unreal mockery, hence! *Macbeth.*

It was a gloomy evening, towards the autumn of the year 1676, and the driving blasts which swept from the sea upon Greville Cross, a dreary and exposed mansion on the coast of Lancashire, gave promise of a stormy night, and added to the desolation which at all times pervaded its vast and comfortless apartments.

Greville Cross had formerly been a Benedictine Monastery, and had been bestowed at the Reformation, together with its rights of forestry, upon Sir Ralph de Greville, the ancestor of its present possessor. Although that part of the building containing the chapel and refectory had been long in ruins, the remainder of the gloomy quadrangle was strongly marked with the characteristics of its monastic origin. It had never been a favourite residence of the Greville family, who were possessed of two other magnificent seats, at one of which, Silsea Castle, in Kent, the present Lord Greville constantly resided; and the Cross, usually so called from a large iron cross which stood in the centre of the court-yard, and to which a thousand romantic legends were attached, had received few improvements from the modernizing hand of taste.

Indeed, as the faults of the edifice were those of solid construction, it would have been difficult to render it less gloomy or more convenient by any change that art

could effect. Its massive walls and huge oaken beams would neither permit the enlargement of its narrow windows, nor the destruction of its maze of useless corridors; and it was therefore allowed to remain unmolested and unadorned, unless when an occasional visit from some member of the Greville family demanded an addition to its rude attempts at splendour and elegance. But it was difficult to convey the new-fangled luxuries of the capital to this remote spot; and the tapestry, whose faded hues and mouldering texture betrayed the influence of the sea air, had not yet given place to richer hangings. The suite of state apartments was cold and comfortless in the extreme; but one of the chambers had been recently decorated with more than usual cost, on the arrival of Lord and Lady Greville, the latter of whom had never before visited her northern abode. Its dimensions, which were somewhat less vast than those of the rest of the suite, rendered it fitter for modern habits of life; and it had long ensured the preference of the ladies of the house of Greville, and obtained the name of "the lady's chamber," by which it is even to this day distinguished. The walls were not encumbered by the portraits of those grim ancestors who frowned in mail, or smiled in farthingale on the walls of the adjacent galleries. The huge chimney had suffered some inhospitable contraction, and was surmounted with marble; and huge settees, glittering with gilding and satin, which in their turn would now be displaced by the hand of Gillow or Oakley, had dispossessed the tall, straight, ebony-backed chairs which, in the olden time, must have inflicted martyrdom on the persons of our weary forefathers.

The present visit of Lord Greville to the Cross, was supposed to originate in the dangerous illness of an old and favourite female servant, who had held undisturbed control over the household since the death of the first Lady Greville, about ten years before. She had been from her infancy attached to the family service; and having married a retainer of the house, had been nurse to Lord Greville, whom she still regarded with something of a maternal affection. Her husband had died the preceding year, equally lamented by the master whom he served, and the domestics whom he ruled; and his wife was now daily declining, and threatening to follow her aged partner to the grave. It was even imagined by the other members of the establishment, that the old lady had written to her master, with whom she frequently corresponded, to entreat a personal interview, in order that she might resign her stewardship into his hands before her final release from all earthly cares and anxieties; and in consideration of the length and importance of her services, none were surprised at the readiness with which her request was granted.

Lord Greville had never visited the north since the death of his first wife; a young and beautiful woman, whom he had tenderly loved, and who died and was interred at Greville Cross. She left no children; and the heir, a fine boy, in the full bloom of childhood and beauty, who now accompanied Lord Greville, was the sole offspring of his second marriage.

Helen, the present Lady Greville, was by birth a Percy; and although her predecessor had been celebrated at the court of Charles, as one of the most distinguished beauties of her time, there were many who considered her eclipsed by the lovely and gentle being that now filled her place. She was considerably younger than her husband; but her attachment to him, and to her child, as well as her naturally domestic disposition, prevented the ill effects often resulting from disparity of years. Lord Greville, whose parents were zealous supporters of the royal cause, had himself shared the banishment of the second Charles; had fought by his side in his hour of peril, and shared the revelries of his court in his after days of prosperity. At an age when the judgment is rarely matured, unless by an untimely encounter with the dangers and adversities of the world, such as those disastrous times too often afforded, he had been employed with signal success in several foreign missions; and it was universally known that the monarch was ever prompt to acknowledge the benefit he had on many occasions derived from the prudent counsels of his adherent, as well as from his valour in the field. But notwithstanding the bond of union subsisting between them, from the period of his first marriage, which had taken place under the royal auspices, Greville had retired to Silsea Castle; and resisting equally the invitations of his condescending master, and the entreaties of his former gay companions, he had never again joined in the amusements of the court. Whether his retirement originated in some disgust occasioned by the licentious habits and insolent companions of Charles, whose present mode of life was peculiarly unfitted to the purer taste and intellectual character of Lord Greville;

or, whether it arose solely from his natural distaste for the parasitical existence of a courtier, was uncertain; but it was undeniable that he had faithfully followed the fortunes of the expatriated king, and even supplied his necessities from his own resources, and that he had only withdrawn his services when they were no longer required.

After the death of Lady Greville, his secluded habits seemed more than ever confirmed; but when he again became possessed of a bride, whose youth, beauty, and rank in society appeared to demand an introduction to those pleasures which her age had hitherto prevented her from sharing, it was a matter of no small mortification to Lord and Lady Percy, to perceive that their son-in-law evinced no disposition to profit by the royal favour, or to relinquish the solitude of Silsea for the splendour of the capital. But Helen shared not in their regrets. She had been educated in retirement; she knew but by report the licentious, but seductive gaieties of the court of Charles; and she had not the slightest wish to increase her knowledge of such dangerous pleasures. Content with loving, and being beloved by, a husband whom she regarded with profound veneration, her happiness was not disturbed by a restless search after new enjoyments; and her delighted parents soon forgot their disappointment in witnessing the contentment of their child.

For some years succeeding her marriage, they perceived no change in the state of her feelings; but at length the anxiety of parental love led them to form surmises, which renewed their former disapprobation of the conduct of Greville. During their frequent visits to Silsea, they observed that his love of study and retirement had deepened almost into moroseness; that his address, always cold and reserved, was becoming offensively distant; and that he was subject to fits of abstraction, and at other times to a peevish discontent, which materially threatened the happiness of their daughter. They also discovered that Helen, whose playful humour and gaiety of heart had been their solace and amusement, even from her infancy, was now pensive and dispirited. By degrees, the bright expression of her countenance had lost all that beaming joyousness of youth, which had been its great attraction, and though still,

> Sphered in the stillness of those heaven-blue eyes,
> The soul sat beautiful,

it was the soul of melancholy beauty.

Alarmed and unhappy, Lady Percy wearied her daughter with inquiries as to the cause of this inauspicious change; but in vain. Helen denied that any alteration had taken place in her feelings; and declared that the new and serious tone of her character arose naturally from her advance in life, and from the duties devolving upon her as a wife and mother.

"Be satisfied, dear madam," said she, "that I am still a happy and adoring wife. You well know that my affections were not won by an outward show of splendour and gay accomplishments, nor by the common attraction of an idle gallantry. It was on Greville's high reputation for just and honourable principles, and on his manly and noble nature, that my love was founded, and these will never change; and if, at times, unpleasant circumstances should arise, into which my sex and age unfit me to inquire, to throw a cloud over his features, or a transient peevishness into his humour, it would ill become me—in short," continued she, in a trembling voice, and throwing her arms round Lady Percy's neck, to conceal her tears, "in short, dear madam, you must remember that dearly, tenderly, dutifully, as Helen loves her mother, —the wife of Greville can have no complaints to make to the Countess of Percy."

But however well the suffering wife might succeed in disguising the bitterness of wounded affection from her inquiring family, she could not conceal it from her own heart. She had devoted herself, in the pride of youthful beauty, to the most secluded retirement, through romantic attachment for one who had appeared to return her love with at least an equal fervour. Her father's house—her own opening and brilliant prospects—her numerous family connexions and "troops of friends,"—she had deserted all for him, in her generous confidence in his future kindness. "His people had become her people, and his God, her God!" She had fondly expected that his society would atone for every loss, and compensate every sacrifice; that in the retirement she shared with him, he would devote some part of his time to the improvement of her mind, and the development of her character; and that in return for her self-devotion, he would cheerfully grant her his confidence and affection. But there—"there where she had garnered up her heart,"—she was doomed to bear the bitterest disappointment. She found herself, on awaking from her early dream of unqualified mutual affection, treated with negligence, and at

times with unkindness; and though gleams of his former tenderness would sometimes break through the sullen darkness of his present disposition, he continually manifested towards both her child and herself, a discontented and peevish sternness, wounding her deeply, and filling her heart with inquietude. She retained, however, too deep a veneration for her husband, too strong a sense of his superiority, to permit her to resent, by the most trifling show of displeasure, the alteration in his conduct. She forbore to indulge even in the

Silence that chides, and woundings of the eye.

Helen's was no common character. Young, gentle, timid as she was, the texture of her mind was framed of sterner stuff; and she nourished an intensity of wife-like devotion and endurance, which no unkindness could tire; and a fixedness of resolve, and high sense of moral rectitude, which no meaner feeling had yet obtained the power to blemish. "Let him be as cold and stern as he will," said she to herself, in her patient affliction, "he is my husband—the husband of my free choice;—and by that I must abide. He may have crosses and sorrows of which I know not; and is it fitting that I should pry into the secrets of a mind devoted to pursuits and studies which I am incapable of sharing? There was a time when I fondly trusted he would seek to qualify me for his companion and friend: but the enchantment which sealed my eyes is over; and I must meet the common fate of woman, distrust and neglect, as best I may."

Anxious to escape the observation of her family, she earnestly requested Lord Greville's permission to accompany him with her son, when he suddenly announced his intention of visiting Greville Cross. Her petition was at first met with a cold negative; but when she ventured to plead the advice she had received recently from several physicians to remove to the sea-coast, and reminded him of her frequent indispositions, and present feebleness of constitution, he looked at her for a time with astonishment at the circumstance of her thus exhibiting so unusual an opposition to his will; and afterwards, with sincere and evident distress, at the confirmation borne by her faded countenance to the truth of her representation.

"Thou art so patient a sufferer," he replied, "that I am somewhat too prone to forget the weakness of thy frame;—but be content! —I must be alone in this long and tedious journey."

The tears which rose in her eyes were her only remonstrance; and her husband stood regarding her for some minutes in silence, but with the most apparent signs of mental agitation on his countenance.

"Helen," said he, at length, in a low, earnest tone, "Helen, thou wert worthy of a better fate than to be linked to the endurance of my waywardness; but God, who sees thine unmurmuring patience, will give thee strength to meet thy destiny. Thou hast scarcely enough of womanly weakness in thee to shrink from idle terrors, or I might strive to appal thee," he added, faintly smiling, "with a description of the gloom and discomfort of thine unknown northern mansion; but if thou art willing to bear with its scanty means of accommodation, as well as with thy husband's variable temper, come with him to the Cross."

Helen longed to throw herself into his arms as in happier days, when he granted her petition; but she had been more than once repulsed from his bosom, and she therefore contented herself with thanking him respectfully; and in another week, they became inmates of Greville Cross.

The evening, whose stormy and cheerless commencement I have before described, was the fourth after her arrival in the north; and notwithstanding the anxiety she had felt for a change of habitation, she could not disguise from herself that there was an air of desolation, a general aspect of dreariness about her new abode, which justified the description afforded by her husband. As she crossed the portal, a sensation of terror, ill-defined, but painful and overwhelming, smote upon her heart—such as we feel in the presence of a secret enemy; and Lord Greville's increasing uneasiness and abstraction since he had returned to the mansion of his forefathers, did not tend to enliven its gloomy precincts.

The wind beat wildly against the casement of the apartment in which they sat; and which, although named "the lady's chamber," afforded none of those feminine luxuries, which are now to be found in the most remote parts of England, within the dwellings of the noble and wealthy. By the side of a huge hearth, where the crackling and blazing logs imparted the only cheerful sound or sight in the apartment, in a richly-carved oaken chair, emblazoned with the armorial bearings of his house, sat Lord Greville, lost in silent contemplation. A chased goblet of wine, with which he occasionally moistened his lips, stood on a table beside him, on

which an elegantly fretted silver lamp was burning; and while it only emitted sufficient light to render the gloom of the spacious chamber still more apparent, it threw a strong glare upon his expressive countenance and noble figure, and rendered conspicuous that richness of attire which the fashion of those stately days demanded from "the magnates of the land;" and which we now only admire amid the mummeries of theatrical pageant, or on the glowing canvass of Vandyck His head rested on his hand; and while Lady Greville, who was seated on an opposite couch, was apparently engrossed by the embroidery-frame over which she leaned, his attention was equally occupied by his son; who stood at her knee, interrupting her progress by twining his little hands in the slender ringlets which profusely overhung her work, and by questions which betrayed the unsuspicious sportiveness of his age.

"Mother," said the boy, "are we to remain all the winter in this ruinous den? Do you know, Margaret says that some of the northern sea winds will shake it down over our heads one stormy night; and that she would as soon lie under the ruins, as be buried alive in its walls. Now I must own I would rather return to Silsea, and visit my hawks, and Cæsar, and—"

"Hush! Sir, you prate something too wildly; nor do I wish to hear you repeat Margaret's idle observations."

"But, mother, I know you long yourself to walk once again in your own dear sunshiny orangerie?"

"My Hugh," said Lady Greville, without attending to his question, "has Margaret shown you the descent to the walk below the cliffs,—and have you brought me the shells you promised to gather?"

"How! dear mother—with the spring tide beating against the foot of the rocks, and the sea raging so furiously that the very gulls dared not take their delicious perch upon the waves. To-morrow, perhaps—"

"Must I deem thee afraid to venture?—When I walked on the sands at noon, there was a bow-shot space of shore!"

"No, mother, no!—not afraid;—not afraid to venture a fall, or meet a sprinkling of sea-spray; and, good truth, I have enough to do with fears in-doors,—here in this grim old mansion,—without—"

"Fears!"—

"Yes, fears, dear mother," said the boy, looking archly round at his attendant, who waited in the back-ground, and who vainly sought by signs to silence her unruly charge. "Do you know that the figure of King Herod,—cruel Herod, the murderer of his wife and the slayer of the innocents—stalks down every night from the tapestry in my sleeping room, and wanders through the galleries at midnight? And then the Cross, where the three Jews were executed a long, long time ago—in the reign of King John, I think—they say that it drops blood on the morning of the Holy Friday. And then, mother—and this is really true," continued the child, changing from his playful manner to a tone of great earnestness, "there is the figure of a lady in rich attire, but pale, very pale, who glides in the gray twilight through the apartments.—Yes! Herbert, and Richard, and several of the serving-men have seen it; and Mistress Alice, poor old soul! was once seen to address it; but she would allow no one to question her on the subject; and they say it was her doom, and that she must die of her present sickness. Ay,—'twas in this very room, too—the lady's chamber."

"Boy," interrupted Lord Greville, sternly, "if thou canst find no better subject for thy prate than these unbecoming fooleries, be silent.—Helen! why should you encourage his forwardness, and girlish love of babbling?—Go hence, sirrah! take thyself to rest; and you, Margaret," added he, turning angrily to the woman, "remember, that from this hour I hear no more insolent remarks on any dwelling it may suit your betters to inhabit, nor of this imp's cowardly apprehensions."

Margaret led her young charge from the room; who, however sad his heart at being thus abruptly dismissed, walked firm and erect, with all the swelling consciousness of wounded pride. Helen followed him to the door with her eyes; and when they fell again upon her work, they were too dim with tears to distinguish the colours of the flowers she was weaving. Lord Greville had again relapsed into silent musing; and as she occasionally stole a glance towards him, she perceived traces of a severe mental struggle on his countenance; the muscles of his fine throat worked convulsively, his lips quivered—yet still he spoke not. At length his eyes closed, and he seemed as if seeking to lose his own reflections in sleep.

"I will try the spell which drove the evil spirit from the mind of the King of Israel," thought the sad and terrified wife; "music hath often power to soothe the darkness of

the soul;" and she tuned her lute, and brought forth the softest of its tones.

At length her charm was successful; Lord Greville slept; and while she watched, with all the intense anxiety of alarmed affection, the unquiet slumbers which distorted one of the finest countenances that sculptor or painter ever conceived, she affected to occupy herself with her instrument, lest he should awake and be displeased to find her attention fixed on himself. With the sweetest notes of a "voice ever soft and low, an excellent thing in woman," she murmured the following song; which was recorded in her family to have been composed by her elder brother, on parting from a lady to whom he was attached, previous to embarking on the expedition in which he fell, and to which it alludes.

CANZONE.	TRANSLATION.
Parte la nave,	The good ship is ready,
Spiegan le vele,	The full sail floats gay,
Vento crudele	The cruel wind steady
Mi fa partir.	Would waft me away.
Addio Teresa,	Adieu, Theresa, love,
Teresa, addio!	Theresa, adieu!
Piacendo a Dio	If it please God above,
Ti rivedrò.	Again I'll meet you.
Non pianger bella,	Weep not, Theresa, dear,
Non pianger, No!—	Weep not, my life,
Chè al mio ritorno	Soon I shall seek thee here
Ti sposerò.	To make thee my wife.
Il Capitano	"On board," cries the Captain;
Mi chiama a bordo;	I turn not nor start,
Io faccio il sordo	But look like a deaf man—
Per non partir!	I cannot depart!
Addio Teresa,	Adieu, Theresa, love,
Teresa, Addio!	Theresa, adieu!
Piacendo a Dio	If it please God above,
Ti rivedrò.	Again I'll meet you.
Non pianger, bella,	Weep not, Theresa, dear,
Non pianger, No!	Weep not, my life,
Che al mio ritorno	Soon I shall seek thee here
Ti sposerò.	To make thee my wife.
Vado a levante	Though eastward I roam, love,
Vado a ponente	Though westward I go,
Se trovo gente	Tidings to thy home, love,
Ti scriverò.	For ever shall flow.
Addio Teresa.	Adieu, Theresa, love,
Teresa Addio;	Theresa, adieu!
Piacendo a Dio	If it please God above,
Ti rivedrò,	Again I'll meet you.
Non pianger bella,	Weep not, Theresa, dear,
Non pianger, No!—	Weep not, my life,
Chè al mio ritorno	Soon I shall seek thee her
Ti sposerò.	To make thee my wife.

Helen had reached the concluding cadence of her soft and melancholy song, when, raising her eyes from the strings to her still sleeping husband, she beheld, with panic-struck and breathless amazement, a female figure standing opposite, resting her hand on the back of his chair;—silent, and motionless, and with fixed and glassy eyes gazing mournfully on herself. She saw—yes!—distinctly saw, as described by little Hugh, "a lady in rich attire, but pale, very pale;" and in the stillness and gloom of the apartment and the hour,

> 'Twas frightful there to see
> A lady richly clad as she,
> Beautiful exceedingly!

The paleness of that pensive face did not lessen its loveliness, and the hair which hung in bright curls on her shoulders and gorgeous apparel, was white and glossy as silver. Helen gazed for a moment spell-bound; for she beheld in that countenance, without the possibility of doubt, the resemblance of the deceased Lady Greville, whose portrait, in a similar dress, hung in the picture gallery at Silsea Castle. She shuddered; for the eyes of the spectre remained steadfastly fixed upon her; and its lips moved as if about to address her.—"Mother of God,—protect me!" exclaimed Helen convulsively, and she fell insensible on the floor.

CHAPTER II.

> Sorrow seems pleased to dwell with so much sweetness;
> And now and then a melancholy smile
> Breaks loose like lightning on a winter's night
> And shows a moment's day. *Dryden.*

On the succeeding morning, when Lady Greville recovered sufficiently from a succession of fainting fits to collect her remembrances of the dreadful cause of her illness, she eagerly demanded of her attendants in what manner, and by whom, she had been placed in her usual sleeping room. They replied, that Lord Greville had conveyed her there insensible in his arms; and had summoned them in great agitation to her assistance. He had since frequently sent to inquire after her health, and had expressed great delight when the last message, announcing her recovery, had reached him. But he came not himself to watch over her; and though the shock she had received had brought on an alarming degree of fever, which confined her for several days to her room, he never visited her chamber. Helen was the more surprised and pained by this neglect, as she knew he made frequent visits to the sick bed of old Alice; and she wept secretly and bitterly over this fresh proof of his alienated love.

During the tedious hours of illness, the mental sufferings of the neglected wife far exceeded those of her corporeal frame. She could reflect but on one subject; one idea,

one pervading horrible idea, had taken possession of her soul. She felt that though every person to whom she might impart her tale would listen with incredulity, and mockery, the truth of that awful visitation could not be questioned by her own better judgment. She considered herself one

> To whom the world unknown
> In all its shadowy shapes is shown.

She shuddered over the remembrance of the past,—she trembled with apprehension of the future. The approach of night was beginning to be terrible to her feelings; the very air appeared, to her disordered imagination, instinct with being; low whisperings seemed to approach her ears; and if the female attendant whom she had stationed by her bedside disappeared for a moment, she instantly fancied she saw that noble figure approach, that pale soft countenance once more gazing upon her, and those cold lips about to address her; and in an agony of approaching insanity, she prayed aloud to the God of all grace, for deliverance from the torture that assailed her. Her prayers were heard; for as her constitution recovered from the shocks it had sustained, her mind gradually returned to its wonted serenity; the impression of the event became less vivid, and in less than a week she was enabled to resume her accustomed habits.

Her return was more warmly greeted by Lord Greville than she had expected. There was something of "lang syne," in his manner of welcoming her to her sitting apartment, which rejoiced her warm and affectionate heart. She did not, however, approach it without trembling; for it was—the lady's chamber! Her feelings were fortunately occupied by the unusual kindness displayed by Lord Greville; and as she silently and gratefully pressed the hand which led her to her seat, she was thankful that he made no inquiries into the particular cause of her illness. She knew that he treated all supernatural terrors with especial contempt; and considered them only as fit subjects for the discussion of the low-minded and ignorant. She had formerly heard him reason soundly, and express himself strongly, on the subject; and her own scepticism on the possibility of spectral visitation, was principally owing to the arguments she had heard from his lips. Frequently had he praised her in former times for her composure of mind in peril, and for her unfeminine superiority to all ideal terrors; and she did not dare provoke his surprise and contempt by a revocation of her principles, or by a relation of the mysterious event which had befallen her. As soon as he left her, she descended into the court enclosed by the quadrangle of the mansion; and as long as day-light lasted, she continued to walk there in order to avoid the solitude of her own dreaded apartment. As she traversed the pavement with hurried steps, she gazed on the huge iron cross, and no longer regarded with indifference the terrific legends attached to it. But at length the closing evening, accompanied by tempestuous winds, compelled her to retire to the house.

Once more she found herself installed for the evening in the abhorred chamber. All was as before—her husband was seated opposite to her in the same chair, by the same lamp-light; the ticking of the time-piece was again painfully audible from the wearisome stillness of the apartment; and her own trembling hands were again lingering over the embroidery-frame from which she dared not lift her eyes. Her heart beat painfully, her breath became oppressed, and she ventured to steal a look at her husband who to her surprise was regarding her with an air of affectionate interest. Relieved for a moment, she returned to her occupation; but her former terrors soon overcame her. She would have given worlds to escape from that room, from that dwelling, and wandered she cared not how, she knew not whither, so she might be rescued from the sight of that awful figure,—from the sound of that dreaded voice.

The conflict in her mind became at length too strong for endurance; and suddenly flinging down her work, she threw herself at her husband's feet, and burying her face in his knees, she sobbed aloud: "Save me from myself, save me, save me, from *her!*"

He raised her gently, and folded her in his arms. "Save thee from whom, my beloved Helen?"

"Greville, believe me or not as thou wilt, but as the Almighty hears and judges me, I have beheld the apparition of thy wife. I saw her freely, distinctly, standing beside thee even where thou sittest; clearly visible as the form of a living being: and she would have spoken, and doubtless revealed some dreadful secret, had not the weakness of my nature refused to support me. Oh! Greville, take me from this room,—take me from this house: I am not able to bear the horrible imaginings which have filled my mind since that awful hour. My very brain is maddened! Oh! Greville, take me hence."

Even in the agony of her fear, Helen started with delighted surprise to feel the tears of her husband falling on her hand. Yes! he, the stern Greville,—the estranged husband,—moved by the deep distress manifested in the appearance of his wife, acknowledged his sympathy by the first tears he had shed in her presence.

"This is a mere phantasm of the brain," said he at length, attempting to regain his composure; "the coinage of a lively imagination, which loves to deceive itself by, —— But no," continued he, observing her incredulous and agonized expression of countenance, "no! my Helen, I will not longer rack thy generous mind by these sufferings, however bitter the truth may be to utter or to hear. Helen! it was no vision—no idle dream—it was a living form, a breathing curse to thee and me! Thou who hast accused me of insensibility to thy charms, and to thine endearing affection, judge of the strength of my love by the labyrinth of sin into which it hath betrayed me. Helen! my wife still lives, and I am not thy lawful husband."

It was many hours before the unfortunate Lady Greville sufficiently recovered her composure to understand and feel the full extent of the fatal intelligence she had received, and the immediate bearing it must have upon her happiness, her rights, and those of her child. As by degrees the full measure of her misery unfolded to her comprehension, she fell into no paroxysm of angry grief, she vented her despair in no revilings against the guilty Greville. Sorrowfully, indeed, but calmly, she requested to be made acquainted with the whole extent of her miserable destiny.

"Let me know the worst," said she. "I have been long, too long deceived; and the only mercy you can now bestow upon me is an unreserved and unqualified confidence."

But Lord Greville could not trust himself to make so painful a communication in words, and after passing the night in writing, he delivered to her the following relation:—

LORD GREVILLE'S HISTORY.

"I need not dwell upon the occurrences of my childhood; I need not relate the events which rendered my youth equally eventful and distinguished. My early life was passed so entirely in the immediate service of my sovereign, and in participation of the troubles and dangers which disastrous times and a rebellious people heaped upon his head, that the tenor of my life has been as public as his own.

"Yet, forgive me, Helen, for saying that I cannot even now, in this my day of humiliation, but glory in the happy fortune which crowned with success my efforts in the royal cause, both in the field and in the cabinet, and won for me at once the affection of my king, and the approbation of my fellow-countrymen, when I remember that to these flattering testimonies I owe not only the friendship of your father, but the first affections of his child. How frequently have you owned to me, in our early days of joy and love, that long before we met, my public reputation had excited the strongest interest in your mind; those days, those happy days, when I was rich alike in the warmest devotion of popular favour, and the approval of,—but I must not permit myself to indulge in fond retrospections! I must steel my heart; and calmly and coldly relate the progress of my misery and guilt, and of its present remorse and punishment.

"You have heard, that soon after the restoration of Charles Stuart to the throne of his ancestors, I was sent on a mission of great public moment to the Hague; where I remained for nearly two years, and having succeeded in the object of government, returned home shortly after the union of the king with the princess of Portugal. I was warmly received by his majesty; and presented by him to the young queen, as one whom he regarded equally as an affectionate friend, and as one of the most faithful servants of the crown. Thus introduced to her notice, it is not wonderful that my homage was most graciously received; and that I was frequently invited to renew it, by admission into the evening circle at Whitehall. The very night after my arrival in London, I was called upon to assist at a masque given on the anniversary of the royal nuptials; at which their majesties alone, and their immediate attendants, were unmasked. The latter, indeed, were habited in character; but among the splendidly-attired group of the maids of honour, I was surprised at perceiving one in a costume of deep mourning. Her extreme beauty and the grace of her demeanour excited an immediate interest in her favour; and her sable suit only served to render yet more brilliant the exquisite fairness and purity of her complexion.

"It was not so much the regular cast of her features as their sweet and pensive expression which produced so strong an effect on the feelings. At the moment I was first struck by her appearance, I happened to be con-

versing with his majesty, who was making the tour of the apartment, graciously leaning on my arm; and my attention was so completely captivated by her surpassing loveliness, that the king could not fail to perceive my absence of mind.

"'How now, Charles, how now,' said he kindly; 'twenty-four hours in the capital, and beauty-struck already? Which among our simple English maidens hath the merit of thus gaining the approval of thy travelled eyes? What Venus hath bribed the purer taste of our new Paris?—Ha! let me see—Lady Joscelyn?—Lady—No! by heaven,' said he, following my looks, 'it is as I could wish—Theresa Marchmont herself. How! man—knowest thou not the daughter of our old comrade, who fell at my side in the unfortunate affair at Worcester?'

"The king took an early opportunity of making my admiration known to her majesty; and of requesting her permission for my introduction to Miss Marchmont; who, although born of a family distinguished only by its loyalty to the house of Stuart, having been recommended to the royal attention from the loss of her only surviving parent in its cause, had sufficiently won the good-will of the monarch by her beauty and elegant accomplishments, to obtain a distinguished post about the person of the new queen.

"From this period, admitted as I was into the domestic circle of the royal household, I had frequent opportunities afforded me of improving my acquaintance with Theresa; whose gentle and interesting manners more than completed the conquest which her beauty had begun. Helen! I had visited many foreign courts, and had been familiarized with the reigning beauties of our own, at that time eminently distinguished by the brilliancy of female beauty; but never in any station of life did I behold a being so lovely in the expressive sadness of her fine countenance, so graceful in every movement of her person. But this was not all—Theresa possessed beyond other women that retiring modesty of demeanour, that unsullied purity of look and speech, which made her sufficiently remarkable in the midst of a licentious court, and among companions whose levity at least equalled their loveliness. On making more particular inquiries respecting her family connexions, I found that they were strictly respectable, but of the middle class of life; and that she had passed the period intervening between the death of her father, General Marchmont, and her appointment at court, in the county of Devon, in the family of an aged relative; by whom indeed she had been principally educated. It was at the dying instigation of this, her last surviving friend and protector, that her destitute situation had been represented to the king by the Lady Wriothesly, to whose good offices she was indebted for her present honourable station. Being thus, as it were, friendless, as well as dowerless, and backed in my suit by the powerful assistance of the king's approbation, I did not anticipate much opposition to my pretensions to the hand of Miss Marchmont, which had now become the object of my dearest ambition. I knew myself to be formed by nature for domestic life; and while the disastrous position of public affairs had obliged me to waste the days of my early youth in camps or courts, and in exile from my own hereditary possessions, I resolved to pass the evening of my life in the repose of a happy and well-ordered home in my native country.

"To the vitiated taste of the gallants of the court, many of whom might have proved powerful rivals had they been so inclined, marriage had no attractions. The acknowledged distaste of Charles for a matrimonial life, and his avowed infidelities, sanctioned the disdain of his dissolute companions for all the more holy and endearing ties of existence. I had therefore little to fear from competition; indeed, among the maids of honour of the queen, whose situation threw them into hourly scenes of revelry and dissipation, Theresa Marchmont, who was universally acknowledged to be the loveliest of the train, excited less than any, those attentions of idle gallantry which, however sought and prized by her livelier companions, are offensive to true modesty. I attributed this flattering distinction to the respect ensured by the extreme *retenue* and propriety of her manners; but I have had reason since to ascribe the reserve of the courtiers to a less commendable motive. On occasion of a masqued festival given by her majesty on her birth-day at Kew, the king, in distributing the characters, allotted to Miss Marchmont that of Diana.

"'Your majesty,' said the Duchess of Grafton, 'has judiciously assigned the part of the frigid goddess, to the only statue of snow visible among us. *Mademoiselle se renchérit sur un petit air de province, glacial et arrangé*,' continued she, turning to the Comte de Grammont.

"'Madam,' said the king, bowing respect-

fully to Theresa, with all that captivating grace of adress for which he was distinguished, 'if every frozen statue were as lovely and attractive as this, I should forget to wish for their animation; and become myself a votary of the

'Queen and huntress, chaste and fair!'

"'Ay,' whispered the Duke of Buckingham, 'even at the perilous risk of being termed Charles—King and *Lunatic*.'

"This *sobriquet* of Diana had passed into a proverb; and such was Theresa's character for coldness and reserve, that I attributed to her temper of mind, the evident indifference with which she received my attentions. Meeting her as I did, either in public assemblies, or in the antechamber of the queen, among the other ladies in waiting, I had no opportunity of making myself more particularly acquainted with her sentiments and character. When I addressed her in the evening circle, although she readily entered into conversation on general subjects, and displayed powers of mind of no common order, yet, if I attempted to introduce any topic which might lead to a discussion of our mutual situation, she relapsed into silence. At times her countenance became so pensive, so touchingly sorrowful, that I could not help suspecting she nourished some secret and hidden cause of grief; and once, on hinting this opinion to the king, who frequently in our familiar intercourse rallied me on my passion for Theresa, and questioned me as to the progress of my suit, he told me, that Miss Marchmont's dejection was generally attributed to her regret for the loss of Lady Wriothesly, the kind patroness who had first recommended her to his protection, and by whose death, immediately before my return from Holland, she had lost her only surviving friend.

"'It remains to be proved,' added he, 'whether her lingering affection for the memory of an old woman will yield readily to her dawning attachment for her future husband.'

"Another suspicion sometimes crossed my mind, but in so uncertain a form, that I could scarcely myself resolve the nature of the evil I apprehended. I observed that Theresa constantly and anxiously watched the eye of the king, whenever she formed a part of the royal suite; and if she perceived his attention fixed on herself, or if he chanced to approach the spot where she stood, she would turn abruptly to me, and enter into conversation with an air of *empressement*, as though to confirm his opinion of our mutual good understanding. Upon one occasion, as I passed through the gallery leading to the queen's apartments, I found his majesty standing in the embrasure of a window, in earnest conversation with Miss Marchmont. They did not at first perceive me; and I had leisure to observe that Theresa was agitated even to tears. She turned round at the sound of approaching footsteps, but betrayed no distress at my surprising her in this unusual situation. In reply to some observation of the king's, she answered, with a respectful inclination, 'Your commands, Sire, shall be obeyed,' and left the gallery; while Charles, gaily taking my arm, led me into the adjoining saloon, and informed me, that he had been pleading my cause with my fair tormentor, as he was pleased to term her.

"'The worst torment I can be called to endure, Sire,' said I haughtily, 'is prolonged suspense; and I must earnestly request your majesty's gracious intercession for Miss Marchmont's early reply to my application for the honour of her hand. Should it be refused, I must further entreat your majesty's permission to resign the post I so unworthily hold, in order that I may be enabled to pass some years on the continent.'

"Charles appeared both startled and displeased by the firm tone of resolution I had assumed. 'Were I inclined for idle altercation,' answered he, coldly, 'I might argue something for the dignity of the fair sex, who have ever claimed their prescriptive right of holding us lingering in their chains; and Lord Greville would do well to remember that his services are too important to his country to be held on the caprices of a silly girl's affected coyness. But be it so!—since you are so petulant a lover, be prepared when you join her majesty's circle to-night, to expect Miss Marchmont's reply.'

"It happened that there was a splendid fête given at the palace that evening, in honour of the arrival of a French ambassador. When I entered the ball-room I caught the eye of the king, who was standing apart, with his hand resting negligently on the shoulder of the Duke of Buckingham; and indulging in an immoderate gaiety apparently caused by some 'fool-born jest' of the favourite's; in which, I know not why, I immediately suspected myself to be concerned. On perceiving my arrival, however, Charles forsook his station; and approaching me with that graceful ease which rendered him at all times the most finished gentleman

of his court, he took me affectionately by the hand, and congratulating me on my good fortune, he led me to Theresa, who was seated behind her companions. Occupied as I was with my own happiness, and with the necessity of immediately expressing my gratitude both to Theresa and the king, I could not avoid being struck by the dreadful paleness of her agitated countenance, which contrasted frightfully with her brilliant attire; for I now saw her for the first time out of mourning for Lady Wriothesly. When I entreated her to confirm by words the happy tidings I had learned from his majesty, who had again returned to the enlivening society of his noble buffoon, she spoke with an unfaltering voice, but in a tone of such deep dejection, and with a fixed look of such sorrowful resolution, that I could scarcely refrain, even in that splendid assemblage, from throwing myself at her feet, and imploring her to tell me whether her consent had not been obtained by an undue exertion of the royal authority. But there was always in Theresa an apparent dread of every cause of emotion and excitement, which made me feel that a wilful disturbance of her calm serenity would be sacrilege.

"During the short period intervening between her consent and our marriage,—which, by the command of the king, was unnecessarily and even indecorously hastened,—these doubts, these fears, constantly recurred to my mind, whenever I found myself in the presence of Theresa; but during my absence, I listened to nothing but the flattering insinuations of my own heart; and I succeeded in persuading myself that her coldness arose solely from maidenly reserve, and from the annoyance of being too much the object of public attention. I remembered the sweetness of her manner, when one day, in reply to some fond anticipation of my future happiness, she assured me, although she could not promise me at once that ardour of affection which my present enthusiasm seemed to require, that if a grateful and submissive wife could satisfy my wishes, I should be possessed of her entire devotion. But although thus reassured, I could scarcely divest myself of apprehension; and on the morning of our nuptials, which took place in the Royal Chapel in presence of the whole court, her countenance wore a look of such deadly, such fixed despair, that the joy even of that happy moment, when I was about to receive the hand of the woman I adored before the altar of God, was completely obliterated.

"She had been adorned by the hand of the queen, by whom she was fondly beloved, with all the splendour and elegance which could enrich her lovely figure; and in the foldings of her bridal veil, her countenance assumed a cast of such angelic beauty, that his majesty, as he presented me with her hand, paused for a moment in delighted emotion to gaze upon her. But even thus, late as it was, and embarrassed by the royal presence, I was so pained by her tears, that I could keep silence no longer.

"'Theresa,' I whispered to her, as we approached the altar, 'if this marriage be not the result of your own free will, speak!—it is not yet too late. Heed not these preparations—fear not the king's displeasure, I will take all upon myself. Speak to me, dearest,—deal with me sincerely.—Theresa, are you willing to be mine?'

"She only replied by bending her knee upon the gorgeous cushion before her. 'Hush!' said she, in a suppressed tone, 'hush, my lord—let us pray to the Almighty for support.' And the service instantly began.

CHAPTER III.

Let not the Heavens hear these tell-tale women
Rail on the Lord's anointed. *Richard III.*

"The month which followed our marriage we passed in the happy retirement of Silsea; and there for the first time I became acquainted with the real character of my Theresa. Her beauty had indeed been the glory of the court; but it was only amid the privacy of domestic life that the accomplishments of her cultivated mind, and the submissive gentleness of her disposition became apparent. Timid almost to a fault, I sometimes doubted whether to attribute her implicit obedience to my wishes to the habit of early dependence upon the caprice of those around her, or to the resignation of a broken spirit. Still she did not appear unhappy. The wearisome publicity and etiquette of the life she had been hitherto compelled to lead, was most unsuitable to her taste for retirement; and she enjoyed equally with myself the calm repose of our quiet home. When she made it her first request to me, that I would take the earliest opportunity to retire from public life, and by settling on my patrimonial estate release her from the slavery of a court, all my former apprehensions vanished; and I began to flatter myself that the love I had so fondly, so frankly bestowed,

had met with an equal return. Prompt as we are to seize on every point which yields confirmation to our secret wishes, and eagerly credulous, where the entire happiness of our lives is dependent on our wilful self-deception, is it wonderful that I mistook the calm fortitude of a well-regulated mind for content, and the gratitude of a warm heart for affection? I inquired not, I dared not inquire minutely into the past; I shrank from any question that might again disturb the serenity of my mind by jealous fears. 'I will not speak of past storms on so bright a day,' said I, secretly, while I gazed upon my gentle Theresa; 'it might break the spell.' Alas! the spell endured not long; for, however unwillingly, we were now obliged to resume our situation at Whitehall.

"Our re-appearance at court was marked by the most flattering attentions on the part of the king and queen. Several brilliant fêtes were given by their majesties on occasion of our marriage; and I began to fear that the homage which every where seemed to await my young and lovely bride, and the promising career of royal favour which opened to her view, might weaken her inclination for the retirement we meditated. To me, however, she constantly renewed her entreaties for a furtherance of her former wishes on the subject; in consequence of which, I declined the gracious offers of his majesty; who was at this time particularly desirous that I should take a more active part in public measures, and accept a situation in the new ministry, which would formerly have placed the utmost bounds to my ambition. I was now, however, only waiting a favourable opportunity to retire altogether to the happy fire-side, where I trusted to dream away the evening of my days in the society of my own family.

"In this position of our affairs, it chanced that we were both in attendance on the queen, at Kew; where, one evening, a chosen few, distinguished by her majesty's favour, formed a select circle. The conversation turned upon music; and the queen, who had been describing with national partiality the beauty of the hymns sung by the Portuguese mariners, suddenly addressing me, observed, that since she left her native country she had heard no vocal music which had given her pleasure, except from the lips of Miss Marchmont.

"'I cannot,' said she, kindly smiling, 'as you may perceive, forget the name of one, whose society I prized so highly; but if 'Lady Greville' will pardon my inadvertence, and oblige me by singing one of those airs with which she was wont fomerly to charm me to sleep when I suffered either mental or bodily affliction, I will in turn forgive *you*, my lord, for robbing me of the attendance of my friend.'

"Theresa instantly obeyed, and while she hung over her instrument her attitude was so graceful, that the queen again observed to me, 'We must have our Theresa seen by Lely in that costume, and thus occupied. She would make a charming study for his pencil; and I promise myself the pleasure of possessing it as a lasting memorial of my young friend.' The portrait to which this observation gave rise, you must have seen yourself, my Helen, in the gallery at Silsea Castle.

"While I was thus engaged by her majesty, I observed the Duke of Buckingham approach my wife with an air of deference bordering on irony; he appeared to make some unpleasant request, which he affected to urge with an earnestness beyond the rules of gallantry or good-breeding; and which she refused with an appearance of haughtiness I had never before seen her exercise. He then respectfully addressed the queen, and entreated her intercession with Lady Greville for a favourite Italian air; one, he said, which her majesty had probably never enjoyed the happiness of hearing. But before the queen could reply, — before I had time to inquire into the cause of the agony and shame which were mingled in Lady Greville's looks, she covered her brow with her hands, and exclaimed with hysteric violence, 'No, never more—never again. Alas! it is too late!'

"The queen, herself deeply skilled in the sorrows of a wounded heart, appeared warmly to compassionate the distress which had robbed her favourite of all presence of mind; and rising, evidently to divert the attention of the circle, whose malignant smiles were instantly repressed, she invited us to follow her into the adjoining gallery, at that time occupied by Sir Peter Lely, for the completion of his exquisite series of portraits of the beauties of Charles's court. In their own idle comments and petty jealousies arising from the resemblances before them, Lady Greville was forgotten.

"While I was deliberating, the following morning, in what manner I could with delicacy interrogate Theresa on the extraordinary scene I had witnessed, I was surprised by her sudden, but firm declaration, that she could not, *would not* longer remain in the royal

suite; and she concluded by imploring me on her knees, as I valued her peace of mind, her health, her salvation, to remove her instantly to Silsea.

"'I have obtained her majesty's private sanction,' said she, showing me a billet in the handwriting of the queen; 'and it only remains for you publicly to give in our resignation.' The letter was written in French, and contained the following words:—

"'Go, my beloved Theresa!—dearly as I prize your society, I feel that our mutual happiness can only be ensured by the retirement you so prudently meditate. May it be a consolation to you to reflect that you must ever be remembered with respect and gratitude, by

'Your affectionate friend.'

"The peculiar terms of this billet surprised me; and I began to request an explanation, when Theresa interrupted me by saying hastily, 'Do not question me, for I cannot at present open my mind to you; but satisfy yourself that when I linked my fate to yours in the sight of God and man, your honour and happiness became precious to me as my own; and may He desert me in my hour of need, if in aught I fail to consult your reputation and peace of mind. Let me pray of you to leave this place without delay. I know that you will urge against me the benefit of avoiding the various surmises which will arise from the apparent precipitancy of our retreat; but trust to me, my lord, that it is a necessary measure; and that we have nothing to fear from the opposition of the king.'

"The pretext we adopted for our hasty retirement from public life was the delicate state of Lady Greville's health, who was within a few months of becoming a mother; and having hastily passed through the necessary ceremonies, we again exchanged the tumults of the capital for the exquisite enjoyments and freedom of home. As we traversed the venerable avenue at Silsea, amid the acclamations of my assembled tenantry, I formed the resolution never again to desert the dwelling of my ancestors; but, having now entered into the bonds of domestic life, to seek from them alone the future enjoyments of existence. I had in one respect immediate reason to congratulate myself on the change of our destiny; for Theresa, whose health had for some months gradually declined, soon regained her former strength in the quiet of the country. She occupied herself constantly in some active employment. The interests of the sick, the poor, and the decrepit, led her frequently to the village; where I doubt not you have often heard her named with gratitude and affection; and when she returned to the castle, the self-content of gratified benevolence spread a glow over her countenance which almost dispelled the clouds of sorrow still lingering there. All went well with us; and if I dared not flatter myself with being passionately beloved, I felt assured that I should in time obtain her entire confidence.

"I was beginning to look forward with the happy anxiety of affection to the event of Lady Greville's approaching confinement, when one morning I was surprised by the arrival of a courier with a letter from the Duke of Buckingham. I was astonished that he should take the trouble of renewing a correspondence with me; as a very slight degree of friendship had originally subsisted between us: and the displeasure publicly testified by Charles on my hasty removal from his service, had hitherto freed me from the importunities of my courtier acquaintance. The letter was apparently one of mere complimentary inquiry after the health of Lady Greville, to whom there was an enclosure, addressed to Miss Marchmont, which he begged me to deliver with his respectful services to my much esteemed lady. He concluded with announcing some public news of a nature highly gratifying to every Briton, in the detail of a great victory obtained by our fleet over the Dutch admiral De Ruyter. It was that, my Helen, in which your noble brother fell, at the moment of obtaining one of the most signal successes hitherto recorded in the naval annals of our country. You were too young to be conscious of the public sympathy testified towards this intrepid and unfortunate young man; but I may safely affirm with the crafty Buckingham, that his loss too dearly purchased even the splendid victory he had obtained.

"'What news from the court?' said Theresa, as I entered the apartment in which she sat.

"'At once good and bad,' I replied. 'We have obtained a brilliant victory over De Ruyter; but, alas! it has cost us the lives of several of our most distinguished officers.'

"She started from her seat, and wildly approaching me, whispered in a tone of suppressed agony, 'Tell me,—tell me truly,—*is he dead?*'

"'Of whom do you speak?'

"'Of *him* — of my beloved — my betrothed; — of Percy, my own own Percy,' — said she with frantic violence.

"Helen — even then, heartstruck as I was, I could not but pity the unfortunate being whose very apprehensions were thus agonizing. I dared not answer her! — I dared not summon assistance, lest she should betray herself to others as she had done to her husband; for she had lost all self-command. I attempted to pacify her by an indefinite reply to her inquiries, but in vain.

"'Do not deceive me,' said she, 'Greville! you were ever good and generous; tell me, did he know all, — did he curse me, — did he seek his death?'

"It occurred to me that the letter which I held in my hand might be from —— from her dead lover; and with a sensation of loathing, I gave it to her. She tore it open, and a lock of hair dropped from the envelope. I found afterwards that it contained a few words of farewell, dictated by Percy in his dying moments; and this sufficiently accounted for the state of mind into which its perusal plunged the unhappy Theresa. Before night she was a raving maniac, and in this state she was delivered of a dead infant.

"Need I describe my own feelings? — need I tell you of the bitter disappointment of my heart in finding myself thus cruelly deceived? — I had ventured all my hopes of earthly happiness on Theresa's affection; and one evil hour had seen the wreck of all! — The eventful moment to which I had looked forward as that which was to confirm the blessings I held, by the most sacred of ties, had brought with it misery and despair; for I was childless, — and could scarcely still acknowledge myself a husband, till I knew how far I had been betrayed. Yet when I looked upon the ill-starred and suffering being before me, my angry feelings became appeased; and the words of reviling and bitterness expired upon my lips.

"Amid the ravings of her delirium, the unfortunate Theresa alternately called upon Percy and myself, to defend her against the arts of her enemies, to save her from the king.

"'They seek my dishonour,' she would say, with the most touching expression, 'and, alas! I am fatherless!'

"'From the vehemence of her indignation whenever she mentioned the name of Charles, I became at length persuaded that some painful mystery connected with my marriage remained to be unfolded; and the papers which her estrangement of mind necessarily threw into my hands, soon made me acquainted with her eventful history. Such was the compassion with which it inspired me for the innocent and injured Theresa, that I have sat by her bedside, and wept for very pity to hear her address her Percy — her lost and beloved Percy; and at other times, call down the vengeance of Heaven upon the king, for his licentious and cruel tyranny.

"It was during her residence on the coast of Devonshire, that she had formed an acquaintance with Lord Hugh Percy, whose ship was stationed at a neighbouring port. They became strongly attached to each other; and with the buoyant incautiousness of youth, had already plighted their faith, before it occurred to either that her want of birth and fortune would render her unacceptable to his parents. Knowing, which he did, that they entertained very different views for his future establishment in life, he dared not at present even make them acquainted with his engagement; and it was, therefore, mutually agreed between them, that she should accept the proffered services of Lady Wriothesly for an introduction to the royal notice; and that he, in the mean while, should seek in his profession the means of their future subsistence. Secure in their mutual good faith, they parted; and it was on this occasion, that he had given her a song, which in her insanity she was constantly repeating. The refrain, '*Addio, Teresa! Teresa, Addio!*' I remembered to have heard murmured by the Duke of Buckingham, with a very significant expression, on the night when the agitation of Lady Greville had made itself so painfully apparent in the circle of the queen.

"You will believe with what indignation, with what disgust, I discovered that shortly after her appointment at court, she had been persecuted with the licentious addresses of the king. It was nothing new to me that Charles, in the selfish indulgence of his passions, overlooked every barrier of honour and decency; but that the unprotected innocence of the daughter of an old and faithful servant, whose very life-blood had been poured forth in his defence, should not have been a safeguard in his eyes, was indeed incredible and revolting. But it was this orphan helplessness, this afflicting destitution, which marked her for his prey.

"Encompassed by the toils of the spoiler, and friendless as she was, the unhappy

Theresa knew not to whom to apply for succour or counsel: and in this painful exigence, she could only trust to her own discretion and purity of intention to shield her from the advances from which she shrank with horror. Irritated by the opposition he encountered, and astonished by that dignity of virtue, which, 'severe in youthful beauty,' had power to awe even a monarch in the consciousness of guilt, the king, by the most ungenerous private scrutiny of her correspondence, made himself acquainted with her attachment to Lord Hugh; and while she was eagerly looking for the arrival of the ship which contained her only protector, the authority of his majesty prolonged its station in a distant and unhealthy climate; where her letters did not reach him, and whence his aid could avail her nothing.

"In this dilemma,—when the death of Lady Wriothesly had deprived her of even the semblance of a friend,—I was first presented to Miss Marchmont. The motive of the king in encouraging my attachment, I can hardly guess; unless he thought to fix her at court by her marriage, where some future change of sentiment might throw her into his power; or possibly he hoped to make my addresses the means of separating her from the real object of her attachment, without contemplating a farther result; and thus the same wanton selfishness which rendered him regardless of every tie of moral feeling towards Theresa, led him to prepare a life of misery and dishonour for his early friend and faithful adherent.

"Agitated by a daily and hourly exposure to the importunities of Charles; insulted by the suspicions which the insinuations of Buckingham had excited in the minds of her companions; friendless—helpless—hopeless,—dreading that she might be betrayed by her ignorance of the world into some unforeseen evil,—and knowing that even in the event of Percy's return, her engagement with him must long remain unfulfilled,—the unhappy girl naturally looked upon her union with me as the only deliverance from these assailing misfortunes; and in an hour of desperation she gave me her hand. That her strongest efforts of mind had been exerted, from the moment of her marriage, to banish all remembrance of her former lover, I firmly believe. The letter acquainting him with the breach of faith which her miserable destiny seemed to render inevitable, had never reached him; and happily—alas! how happily for him—his last earthly thoughts were permitted to rest on Theresa, as his beloved and affianced wife. I am persuaded that had he returned in safety to his native country, she would have avoided his society as studiously as she did that of the king; and that, had she been spared the blow which deprived her of reason, her dutiful regard, and, in time, her devoted affection, would have been mine as firmly, as though the vows which gave them to my hopes had been untainted by any former passion. As it was, we were both victims—I, to her misfortunes—she, to the brutality of the king.

"It appeared to me that on our return to court, after our ill-fated union, the king had for some time refrained from his former insulting importunities; and had merely distressed Lady Greville by indulging in a mockery of respectful deference, which exposed her to the ridicule of those around her, who could not fail to observe his change of manner. Perceiving, by my unconstrained expressions of grateful acknowledgment for his furtherance of my marriage with Theresa, that she had kept his secret; and incapable of appreciating that purity of mind which rendered such an avowal difficult, even to her husband, and that prudence which foresaw the evils resulting to both from such a disclosure; he drew false inferences from her discretion, and gradually resumed his former levities. Nor was this the only evil with which she had now to contend. Some malicious enemy had profited by her absence to poison the mind of the queen, with jealous suspicions of her favourite: and to inspire her with a belief, that Miss Marchmont's propriety of demeanour in public, had only been a successful mask of private indiscretion; that Charles, in short, had not been an unsuccessful lover.

"Unwilling to confide to me the difficulties by which she was assailed, unable alone to steer among the rocks that impeded her course, Theresa at length adopted the bold measure of confiding her whole tale to her royal mistress; whose knowledge of the king's infidelities was already too accurate to admit of an increase of affliction from this new proof; and on receiving a letter from the avowed friend of her husband,—the grateful patron of her dead father,—the august father of his people,—containing the most insolent declarations of passion, she vindicated her innocence by placing it in the hands of the queen; at the same time entreating permission that her further services might be dispensed with.

"Her majesty's reply, equally gratifying and affectionate, you have already seen; and it was in savage and unmanly revenge towards Theresa for the frankness and decision of her conduct, that the king had directed his favourite to enclose me that letter whose sudden perusal had wrought the destruction of my unhappy wife. You will easily conceive that the terms of my answer to the Duke of Buckingham were those of unmeasured indignation:—yet he, the parasite, the ready instrument of royal vice, and the malignant associate of Charles in his last act of premeditated cruelty, suffered the accusations of the injured husband to pass unnoticed and unrepelled; and I am persuaded that nothing but the dread of exposure prevented me from feeling the full abuse of the prerogative of the crown, by the master I had served with so much fidelity and affection. I have never since that period held direct or indirect communication with a court where the basest treachery had been my only reward.

"For many months the paroxysms of Lady Greville's distemper were so violent as to require the strictest confinement; and the medical man who attended her assured me that when this state of irritation should subside, she would either be restored entirely to the full exercise of her mental faculties, or be plunged into a state of apathy,—of tranquil but confirmed dejection,—from which, although it might not affect her bodily health, she would never recover. How anxiously did I watch for this crisis of her disorder! and yet at times I scarcely wished her to awake to a keener sense of her afflictions; for being incapable of recognising my person in my frequent visits to her chamber, I have heard her address me in her wanderings for pardon and pity.

"'Forgive me, Greville! forgive me!' she would say. 'Remember how forlorn a wretch I shall become, when thou too, like the rest, shalt abandon and persecute me. Am I not thy wedded wife, and as faithful as I am miserable? Am I not the mother of thy child?—and yet I know not;—for I seek my poor infant, and they will not, will not give it to me. Tell me,' she whispered, with a ghastly smile, 'have they buried it in the raging sea with him whom I must not name?'—

"The decisive moment arrived; and Lady Greville's insanity was, in the opinion of her physicians and attendants, confirmed for life. She relapsed into that state of composed but decided aberration of mind, in which she still remains. I soon observed that my presence alone appeared to retain the power of irritating her feelings; she seemed to shrink instinctively from every person with whom she had been in habits of intercourse previous to her misfortune. I therefore consigned this helpless sufferer to the charge of the nurse of my own infancy, Alice Wishart; whom, from her constant residence at The Cross, Lady Greville had never seen.

"This trustworthy woman, and her husband, who was also an hereditary retainer of our house, willingly devoted themselves to the melancholy service required; and hateful as Silsea had now become to my feelings, I broke up in part my establishment, and became a restless and unhappy wanderer; seeking in vain, oblivion for the past, or hope for the future. Would to God I had possessed sufficient fortitude to remain chained to the isolation of my miserable home!—for then had we never met; and thou, my Helen, wouldst have escaped this hour of shame and sorrow."

CHAPTER IV.

Courteous Lord—one word—
Sir, you and I have loved—but that's not it—
Sir, you and I must part.—*Anthony and Cleopatra.*

"Hitherto I have had to dwell in my recital on the vices and frailties of my brothers of the dust, and to describe myself as an innocent sufferer; but I now approach a period of my life, from the mention of which I shrink with well-grounded apprehensions. Yet judge me with candour; remember the strength of the temptation through which I erred; and divesting yourself, if possible, of the recollection of your own injuries, moderate your resentment against an unfortunate being, who for many long years of his existence has not enjoyed one easy hour.

"It was nearly three years after the period to which I have alluded, that an accident of which I need not remind you, my beloved Helen, introduced me to the acquaintance of your family. You may remember the backwardness with which I first received their approaches; the very name of Percy had become ominously painful to me, and yet it inspired me with a strange and undefinable interest. A spell appeared to attract me towards you; and in spite of my first resolution to the contrary, in spite of the melancholy reserve that still dwelt upon my mind, I became an acquaintance, and at

length the favoured inmate and friend of your father. Could I imagine the dangers that lurked beneath his roof? Could I believe that, while I thus once more indulged in the social converse to which I had been long a stranger, I should gain the affections of his child? The playful girl, towards whom my age enabled me to assume an almost parental authority, while I exercised, in turn, the parts of playmate and preceptor, beloved as she was in all the charms of her dawning beauty, and artless *naiveté*, inspired me with no deeper sentiment; not even when I saw her gradually expand into the maturer pride of womanhood, and acquire that feminine gentleness, that dignified simplicity of character, which had attracted me in Theresa Marchmont. Early in our intercourse I had acquainted Lord Percy that the confinement of a beloved wife, in a state of mental derangement, was the unhappy cause of my dejection and wandering habits of life; and I rejoiced to perceive that his own wise seclusion from the world had prevented him from hearing my history related by others. He was also ignorant of the name and connexions of the lady to whom he knew his beloved and lamented son to have been attached; and little indeed did he suspect his own share in producing my domestic calamity.

"The disparity of our years, and their knowledge of my own previous marriage, prevented them from regarding with suspicion the partiality displayed by their Helen for my society, and the influence which I had unconsciously acquired over her feelings. For a length of time I was myself equally blind; and the moment I ventured to fear the dangers of the attachment she was beginning to form, I took the resolution of tearing myself altogether from her society; and, without the delay of an hour, I returned to Silsea.

"But what a scene did I select to reconcile me to the loss of the cheerful society I had abandoned! My deserted home seemed haunted by shadows of the past, and tenanted only by remembrances of former affliction. In my hour of loneliness and sorrow, I had no kind friend to whom to turn for consolation; and for the first time the sterile and gloomy waste over which my future path of life was appointed, filled me with emotions of terror and regret. My very existence appeared blighted through the treachery of others; and all those holy ties which enrich the evening of our days with treasures far dearer than awaited us even in the morning of youth, appeared withheld from me,—and me only. Helen! it was then, in that moment of disappointment and bitterness, that the remembrance of thy loveliness, and the suspicion of thine affection, conspired to form that fatal passion which has been the bane of thy happiness, and the origin of my guilt.

"Avoiding as I scrupulously did the range of apartments inhabited by the unfortunate Lady Greville, several years had passed since I had beheld her; and sometimes when I had been bewildered in the reveries of my own desolate heart, I began to doubt her very existence. Yet this unseen being, who appeared to occupy no place in the scale of human nature,—this unconscious creature, who now dwelt in my remembrance like the unreal mockery of a dream,—presented an insuperable obstacle to my happiness. I saw my inheritance destined to be wrenched from me

> By an unlineal hand,
> No son of mine succeeding;

and I felt myself doomed to resign every enjoyment and every hope for the sake of one to whom the sacrifice availed as nothing; one too who had permitted me to fold her to my heart in the full confidence of undivided affection, while her own was occupied by a passion whose violence had deprived me of my child, and herself of intellect and health.

"Such were the arguments by which I strove to blind myself to my rising passion for another; and to smother the self-reproaches which assailed me when I first conceived the fatal project of imposing upon the world by the supposed death of my wife, and of seeking your hand in marriage. How often did the better feelings of my nature recoil from such an act of villany—how often was my project abandoned, how often resumed, at the alternate bidding of passion and of virtue! I will not repeat the idle sophistry which served to complete my wilful blindness; nor dare I degrade myself in your eyes by a confession of the tissue of contemptible fraud and hypocrisy into which I was necessarily betrayed by the execution of my dark designs. Oh! Helen—this heart of mine was once honest, once good and true as thine own; but now there crawls not on this earth a wretch whose lying lips have uttered falsehoods more villanous than mine! and honour, the characteristic of the ancient house I have disgraced, the best attribute of the high calling I have polluted, is now a watchword of dismay to my ear.

"In Alice Wishart and her husband I found ready instruments for the completion of my purpose; and indeed the difficulties which awaited me were even fewer than I had first anticipated. The ravings of Lady Greville, and her distracted addresses to the name of her lover, had inspired her attendants with a belief of her guiltiness, which in the beginning of her illness I had vainly attempted to combat. It was not, therefore, to be expected, that these faithful adherents of my family, who loved me with an almost parental devotion, and whose regret for the extinction of the name of Greville, was the ruling passion of their breasts, should consider her an object worthy the sacrifice of my entire happiness. The few scruples they exhibited, which were those rather of expediency than of conscience, were easily overcome. By their own desire they removed to Greville Cross, for the more ready furtherance of our guilty plan; under pretence that the health of the unfortunate Theresa required change of air. On their arrival, they found it easy to impress the servants of the establishment with a belief of her precarious state; and the nature of her malady afforded them a plausible pretext for secluding her from their observation and attendance. Accustomed to receive from Alice a daily account of her declining condition, the announcement of her death excited no surprise. In a few weeks after her journey, a fictitious funeral completed our system of deception.

"The moment when, according to our concerted plan, the death and interment of Lady Greville were formally announced to me, I repented of the detestable scheme which had been thus successfully executed. My soul revolted from the part of 'excellent dissembling' I had yet to act; and refused to stoop to a public exhibition of feigned affliction. I shuddered, too, when I contemplated the shame which awaited me, should some future event, yet hidden in the lap of time, reveal to the world the secret villany of the man who had borne himself so proudly among his fellows. Yet even these regrets, even the apprehension of fresh difficulties in the concealment of my crime, were insufficient to deter me from the prosecution of my original intention; and blinded by the intemperance of misguided affection, heedless of the shame and misery into which I was about to plunge the woman I adored, I sought and obtained your hand.

"Helen! from that moment I have not known one happy hour; and the first punishment dealt upon my sin was an utter incapability to enjoy that affection for which I have forfeited all claim to mercy, here and hereafter. The remembrance of Theresa,—not in her present state of self-abstraction, but captivating as when she first received my vows before God, to 'love and honour her, in sickness and in health,' haunted me through every scene of domestic endearment; and pursued me even to the hearth whose household deities I had blasphemed. I trembled when I heard my Helen addressed as Lady Greville; when I saw her usurping the rights, and occupying the place of one, who now appeared a nameless 'link between the living and the dead.' I could not gaze upon the woman whose affections had been so partially, so disinterestedly bestowed upon me, and whose existence I had in return polluted by a pretended marriage. I could not behold my boy, the descendant of two of the noblest houses in Britain, yet upon whom the stain of illegitimacy might hereafter rest, without feelings of self-accusation which filled the cup of life with the waters of bitterness. Alas! its very springs were poisoned! and Helen, however strong, however just thine indignation against thy betrayer, believe, oh! believe that even in this life I have endured no trifling measure of punishment for my deep offences against thee and thine!

"But such is the frailty of human nature, that it was upon these very victims I suffered the effects of my remorse and mental agony to fall. The ill-suppressed violence of my temper, irritated by the dangers of my situation, has already caused you many a sorrowful moment; and the increase of gloom you must have lately perceived, has originated in the fresh difficulties arising to me from the death of the husband of Alice, and the dread of her own approaching dissolution. From these causes, my present visit to this dreary abode was determined; and to them I am indebted for the premature disclosure which has made thy life as wretched as my own. The sickness of her surviving attendant has latterly allowed more liberty to the unhappy Theresa than her condition renders safe either to her or me. I could not, on my arrival here, collect sufficient resolution to look upon her, and to adopt those measures of security which the weakness of Alice has left disregarded. To this infirmity of purpose on my part, must be ascribed the dreadful shock you sustained by the sudden appearance of the unfortunate maniac, who, I conclude, was attracted to our apartment by

the long-forgotten sound of music. On that fatal evening, your fall awoke me from my sleep; and I then perceived my Helen lying insensible on the floor; and Theresa—yes!—the altered, and to me terrible figure of Theresa, bending over her. For one dreadful moment I believed that you had fallen a victim to her insanity.

"And now, Helen,—my injured but fondly-beloved Helen,—now that my tale of evil is fully disclosed, resolve at once the doom of my future being. Yet in mercy be prompt in your decision; and, whether you determine to unfold to the whole world the measure of my guilt, or, since nothing can now extricate us from the web of sin and shame in which we are involved, to assist in shielding me from a discovery which would be fatal to the interests of our innocent child, let me briefly hear the result of your judgment. Of this alone it remains for me to assure you—that I will not one single hour survive the publication of my dishonour."

For several hours succeeding the perusal of the foregoing history, Lady Greville remained chained as it were to her seat, by the bewildering perplexities of her mind. The blow, in itself so sudden, so fraught with mischiefs, involving a thousand interests, and affording no hope to lessen its infliction, appeared to stupify her faculties. Lost in the contemplation of evils from which no worldly resource availed to save herself or her child, indignation, compassion, and despair, by turns obtained possession of her bosom. Her first impulse, worthy of her gentle nature, was to rush to the bed-side of her sleeping boy, and there, on her knees, to implore divine aid to shelter his unoffending innocence, and grace to enlighten her mind in the choice of her future destiny. And He, who in dealing the wound of affliction, refuseth not to those who seek it the balm that softens its endurance, imparted to her soul a fortitude to bear, and a wisdom to extricate herself from the perils by which she was assailed. The following letter acquainted Lord Greville with her final determination:

"Greville!

"I was about, in the inadvertence of my bewildered mind, to address you once more by the title of husband; but that holy name must hereafter perish on my lips, and be banished like a withering curse from my heart. Yet it was that alone, which, holding a sacred charter over my bosom, bound me to the cheerful endurance of many a bitter hour; ere I knew that through him who bore it, a descendant of the house of Percy would be branded as an adulteress, and her child as the nameless offspring of shame. Rich as I was in worldly gifts, my birth, my character, the fair fortunes which you have blighted, and the parental care from which you have withdrawn me, alike appeared to shelter me from the evils which have befallen me.—But wo is me! even these were an insufficient protection against the craftiness of mine enemy.

"But reproaches avail me not. Henceforth I will shut up my sorrow and my complaining within the solitude of my own wounded heart;—and thou, 'my companion, my counsellor, mine own familiar friend,' the beloved of my early youth, the father of my child, must, from this hour, be as nothing unto me!

"Hear my decision! Since one who has already trampled upon every tie, divine and human, at the instigation of his own evil passions, would scarcely be deterred from further wickedness by any argument of mine, I dare not tempt the mischief contemplated by your ungovernable feelings against your life. I will, therefore, solemnly engage to assist you, by every means in my power, in the preservation of the secret on which your very existence appears to depend. As the first measure towards this object, I will myself undertake that attendance on Lady Greville which cannot be otherwise procured without peril of disclosure. Towards this unfortunate being, my noble brother's betrothed wife, whose interests have been sacrificed to mine, no sisterly care, no affectionate watchfulness shall be wanting on my part to lessen the measure of her afflictions. I will remain with her at Greville Cross, sharing the duties of Alice so long as she shall live, and supplying her place when she shall be no more. I feel that God has doomed my proud spirit to the humiliation of this trial; and I trust in his goodness that I may have strength cheerfully and worthily to fulfil my part. From you I have one condition to exact in return.

'Henceforward we must meet no more in this world. I can pity you,—I can even forgive you,—but I cannot yet school my heart to that forgetfulness of the past, that indifference, with which I ought to regard the husband of another. Greville! we must meet no more!

"And since my son will shortly attain an age when seclusion in this remote spot

would be prejudicial to his interests, and to the formation of his character, I pray you take him from me at once, that I may have no further sacrifice to contemplate. Let him reside with you at Silsea, under the tuition of proper instructors; breed him up in nobleness and truth; and let not his early nurture, and the care with which I have sought to instil into his mind principles of honour and virtue, be utterly lost. Let his happiness be the pledge of my dutiful fulfilment of the task I have undertaken; and may God desert me and him, when I fail through negligence or hardness of heart.

"And if at times the stigma of his birth should present itself to irritate your mind against his helpless innocence,—as, alas! I have latterly witnessed, smite him not, Greville, in your guilty wrath;—remember he is come of gentle blood, even on his mother's side—and ask yourself to *whom* we owe our degradation,—and from whose quiver the arrow was launched against us?

"And now, farewell——may the Almighty enlighten and forgive you,—and if in this address there appear a trace of bitterness, do not ascribe it to any uncharitable feelings; but look back upon the past, and think on what I was, on what I am. Consider whether ever woman loved or trusted as I have done, or was ever more cruelly betrayed?—Oh! Greville, Greville! did I not regard you with an affection too intense for my happiness! did I not confide in you with a reverence, a veneration, unmeet to be lavished on a creature of clay? But you have broken the fragile idol of my worship before my eyes; and the after-path of my life is dark with fear and loneliness. But be it so; my soul was proud of its good gifts; and now that I am stricken to the dust, its vanity is laid bare to my sight: haply, 'it is good for me that I have been afflicted.'——Farewell for ever!"

The conditions of this letter were mutually and strictly fulfilled; but the mental struggle sustained by Lord Greville, his humiliation on witnessing the saint-like self-devotion of Helen Percy, combined with the necessity which rendered it expedient to accept her proffered sacrifice, were too much for his frame. In less than a year after his return to Silsea he died—a prey to remorse.

Previous to his decease, in contemplation of the nobleness of mind which would probably induce the nominal Lady Greville to renounce his succession, he framed two testamentary acts. By one of these he acknowledged the nullity of his second marriage, but bequeathed to Helen, and her child, all that the law of the land enabled him to bestow; by the other he referred to Helen only as his *lawful* wife, and to her son as his representative and successor, adding to their legal inheritance all his unentailed property. Both were enclosed in a letter to Lady Greville, written on his death-bed; which left it entirely at her own disposal, *which* to publish, *which* to destroy.

It is not to be supposed that the selection cost her one moment's hesitation. Having resigned into the hands of the lawful inheritor all that the strictest probity could require, and much that his admiration of her magnanimity would have prevailed on her to retain, she retired peaceably to a mansion in the South, bequeathed by Lord Greville to her son, and occupied herself exclusively with his education. In the commencement of the ensuing reign he obtained the royal sanction to use the name and arms of Percy; and in his grateful affection, and the virtuous distinctions he early attained, his mother met with her reward.

Theresa,—the helpless Theresa,—the guardianship of whose person had been bequeathed to Helen, as a mournful legacy, by Lord Greville, was removed with her from her dreary imprisonment at the Cross; and to the latest moment of her existence partook of her affectionate and watchful attention.

It was a touching sight to behold these two unfortunate beings, linked together by ties of so painful a nature, and dwelling together in companionship. The one richly gifted with youthful loveliness, clad in a deep mourning habit, and bearing on her countenance an air of fixed dejection;—the other, though far her elder in years, still beautiful,—with her long silver hair, blanched by sorrow, not by time, hanging over her shoulders; and wearing, as if in mockery of her unconscious widowhood, the gaudy and embroidered raiment to which a glimmering remembrance of happier times appeared to attach her.—The vacant smile and wandering glance of insanity lent at times a terrible brilliancy to her fair features; but for the most part her malady assumed a cast of settled melancholy and patient as

The female dove, ere yet her golden couplets are disclosed,
Her silence would sit drooping.

Her gentleness and submission would have endeared her to a guardian even less tenderly

interested in her fate than Helen Percy; towards whom, from their first interview, she had evinced the most gratifying partiality.

"I know you," she said, on beholding her; "you have the look and voice of Percy; you are a ministering angel whom he has sent to defend his poor Theresa from the King, now that she is sad and friendless. You will never abandon me, will you?" continued she, taking her hand, and pressing it to her bosom.

"Never — never — so help me, Heaven!" answered the agitated Helen; and that sacred promise remained unbroken.

THE RANGERS OF CONNAUGHT.

BY EDWARD QUILLINAN.

CHAPTER I.

A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.
Wordsworth.

There is but one shame I that never was gracious,
Shakspere.

TYRERAGH is a tract of country on the north-western coast of Ireland. A stranger, first visiting it in the winter season, might imagine that he had penetrated to the very region of desolation. It is thinly sprinkled with dwellings, and those are not of the most inviting appearance. Few trees or green fences are to be seen within its mountain boundaries; low loose walls, of gray stone, drearily intersect the farms; but the soil is good; its cornfields are as productive as lands of smoother dress, and its pastures are as green as the valley of Urseren. The dark heights, with which it is diversified, have an air of gloomy greatness that overshadows the stranger's mind with melancholy. Here and there, however, their severity is softened by the yellow bloom of the furze, or the warm tints of various heaths which give shelter to many packs of grouse. There are steep, broken acclivities, and stony caverns, the abodes of birds of prey, in these heights; and the sportsman is not only often annoyed by the bleating of the heather-cock — the signal warning to his mate and brood of the presence of an enemy or the approach of a storm — but he is occasionally assailed by the screams of the vulture or the eagle, that denounces him as the invader of its rights.

Towards the centre of this district, and nearly three miles from a coast where the billows of the Atlantic beat against craggy promontories and creeks, and toss their spray-wreaths upon the heads of the dark rocks, stood Dromore, the ancient seat of Sir Guy Vernon. This place, being much sheltered, had the advantage of being nearly surrounded with majestic old wood, in which, with the exceptions of this and one neighbouring seat, the barony of Tyreragh was then as deficient as it is still. Dromore was situated at the foot of the mountain called Knockachree, the *hill of the heart*, which was at that time clad, almost to the summit, with fine oak and horse-chestnut trees. To every window of the house some striking prospect was presented; but from the front in particular were seen the beautiful bay of Sligo, and the wild shores of Althō, overlooked by a superb amphitheatre of mountains, of which Knocknaree, the *hill of the king*, famous for its romantic glen, and Benbulbin, the *hill of hawks*, stand pre-eminent in height and magnitude. The long straight avenue to Dromore was so thickly shaded by oaks as to receive but a partial light at noonday; and the solemn effect thus given to the approach harmonized well with the outward appearance of the mansion, a structure raised in the time of Henry VIII., in that blended style of architecture then in vogue, a quaint mixture of monastic and Roman, not in the purest taste, but lordly and imposing.

So far, too, as relates to a due observance of the rites of hospitality, the interior of the building preserved its old Irish character, at the time to which I refer, for its possessor had all the convivial qualities of his countrymen. But Sir Guy, though a goodnatured man, was also a person of strong passions and prejudices; and, though of a sociable disposition, he not only excluded from his intimacy almost every person who was not, like himself, "a stanch loyalist and Protestant," — terms synonymous in the Orange vocabulary, — but he had actually ceased to be on visiting terms with his best and nearest neighbour, a brother baronet and magistrate moreover, because the latter had refused his

name to an Orange lodge of Sir Guy's formation.

Yet Sir Guy was not altogether consistent in regard to his party prejudices; for, though his Orange creed had descended to him like an heir-loom, and he wished "confusion to popery," without exactly knowing why; and though he felt it equally natural to hate a papist, and to drink the "glorious memory," and he did both with all his heart and soul, there were, nevertheless, times when his characteristic good humour, the false coin which frequently passes for genuine good temper, seemed to allow his catholic antipathies to slumber; he could even, on occasion, endure the company of some individuals of the *caste*, but perhaps he seldom, if ever, thoroughly enjoyed it.

Lady Vernon was an elegant and accomplished woman, gifted with that fascination of easy manner, and those lively conversational talents, for which Irish ladies are so distinguished.

Mary Vernon was their only child, and had but just attained her seventeenth year. Every heroine of romance is beautiful; and, as this is a romantic story, it may be expected that Mary, the genius of the tale, should be arrayed in no ordinary graces. I might, indeed, without painting ideal charms, represent her as a lovely and most interesting girl. I might dwell on the golden curling tresses, the skin of spotless purity, the light variable eyes of ineffable expression, the airy sylph-like form, and the voice melodious as the song of angels. But all this would convey little idea of the person and none of the mind of Mary Vernon. There was something in her air and manner above the praise of common language; some eternal charm of such perfect delicacy as none but words of inspiration could describe.

No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

Her mind had been nurtured with all the assiduity which the fondest mother, herself studiously accomplished, could apply, with judiciously selected aids, to the tuition of an only child, endowed by nature with quick perception. Never was a creature more poetically attractive than Mary, when, at this time, all innocence and joy, she looked the very figure of Hope, in all its spirituality and animation, "when Hope, enchanted, smiled, and waved her golden hair." Let her not, however, be supposed to be a faultless female monster, disowned by Nature, and useless for the purpose of example, because above all mortal imitation. Mary had her failings, her movements of vanity, and—

—— for even in the tranquillest climes
Light breezes will ruffle the flowers sometimes—

her occasional waywardness of temper. Lady Vernon's immoderate partiality had blinded her to her daughter's faults, or, at least, to the danger attending them, and she had suffered Mary to grow up a creature of impulse, in the almost unbounded indulgence of her own will.

One of the very few near neighbours of the Vernons was Mr. O'Neil, a Roman Catholic gentleman, of some wealth, a jealous stickler for the dignity of his family, about whose historical glories he was insane, and a strangely selfish old man. He resided in a dismally hideous, but very large, house, on his own estate, about three miles distant from Dromore. He was a bigot without religion, a tyrant without power; he was proud without honour, because at once the vainest as well as haughtiest of men; a hermit through self-love, he made a shrine of his own breast for the idol which his neighbours would not worship: he detested his neighbours, over whom he affected every superiority, both personal and derivative; and yet he was tremblingly sensitive to their censure and dislike. Flattery melted him to meanness, and at the slightest offence he would bristle with resentment.

There could not be much cordiality between such a character and Sir Guy Vernon. Their mutual ancestors had seldom been on good terms, political and religious subjects of animosity constantly estranging them. It oddly happened, however, that Sir Guy was almost the only one of his neighbours with whom Mr. O'Neil had not quarrelled; and, latterly, the "lofty old Jacobite," as Sir Guy termed him, had condescended to be very civil to the Vernons. He was not without a motive for this rare urbanity. Mr. O'Neil was a widower, who had two sons; Miss Vernon was an heiress, whose broad future heritage lay commodiously contiguous to his own less considerable demesne. It was not, however, for his elder, but for his younger son, that he destined the prize. He *hated* his first-born, Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil, because, curious old man! his features did not please him; in common parlance, "he did not think him handsome!" and yet this Gerald Fitzmaurice was, both in features and person, as striking

a likeness of his father as the smooth and fresh young tree can be to the same scored and weather-stricken tree of after-years. In mind no father and son were ever more dissimilar. It was the younger whose *mind* was the mirror of his father's—but a cracked mirror, multiplying its deformities: more of him presently.

Gerald Fitzmaurice, the elder son, was at Douay College. He was in his twenty-third year. Mr. O'Neil had hit upon a notable plan of keeping him unmarried, that the family estate might eventually devolve to the junior. He had worked on the religious sensibility and enthusiastic temperament of Gerald Fitzmaurice, and persuaded him that he had a decided vocation to the altar, and that it was his duty to become a priest! It was not the custom for eldest sons to take to the church: so much the better; the self-offering would be therefore the more acceptable to Heaven, and the example the more edifying. Instructions conformable to these views had been sent with him to the president of the college; he had now been there eight years, and the scheme seemed likely to succeed.

The younger son, Aubrey Buller O'Neil, now in the twenty-second year of his age, was already initiated in the family manœuvre; for his father had explained to him his intentions, both with regard to his own estate and Sir Guy's. The boy grinned with a surly acquiescence in his father's views, scorning the facility of his brother, whose bargain he thought worse than Esau's.

As to Miss Vernon, he had often seen, but never spoken to her; and he was in no hurry for the acquaintance for her own sake, because he was utterly incapable of a refined attachment: but as an accompaniment of the Dromore estates, she was worth his consideration. There was, however, time enough for that. In the meanwhile, humbler amours were more congenial to his taste, though no marriage alliance could be too high for his pretensions. A strange animal was this Aubrey; with arrogance that would reach the clouds, but for want of strength of wing was for ever sweeping the dust. If nature ever deigned to produce a human machinery in little for the lowest purposes of art, and needing only time and growth to be fit for its ignoble functions, here was the example. He was an attorney in embryo from the hour of his birth. He had a twin-brother, and at the breast cheated him of his fair share of their mother's milk. Laughable as this may seem, it was no joke to the wretched little co-candidate for suction; for they were so alike that it was not easy to guard against imposture: he who squalled and kicked the most was supposed to be the aggrieved party; so the feebler urchin died of starvation, and little Aubrey Buller was left master of the field, where he tugged and grunted till he quite exhausted the strength of the mother, who refused to hand him over to a wet-nurse, and died of consumption a few months after he was weaned. In the nursery, as he grew up, the sullen impracticable brat won for himself the title of "the Angry Boy," which he never afterwards lost. But I am not going to weary the reader with the history of his dogged childhood. He is now, as I have said, almost twenty-two years of age, and he has already all the vices of his father in a coarser grain. In all his movements, too, there is a mysteriousness which he mistakes for worldly science. He fancies himself a domestic politician; he is simply a Machiavel of the keyhole: his art is exercised in extracting secrets from letters dishonestly procured, in violating the safeguards of seals and locks, in perpetrating every imaginable act of petty and unmanly turpitude. With all this, he is moody and irascible to excess, exigent of deference, and jealously watchful of disrespect; and, in his least unaimable moods, he is a scoffer, whose expression of countenance is that of the laughing hyæna. He is a ruffian in manners, and a pickpocket in morals How much of the unqualified odiousness of this character may be attributed to parental neglect, or evil training, is now hardly worth speculation. Certain it is that he had been permitted from infancy to run wild as the colts in his father's park; not like them to be submitted in due time to the bit and the ménage. He had indeed been sent to a school at Sligo, from which he ran away and the only further education he had received was very irregularly supplied by the parish priest. An occasional visit to Dublin, where he fell into boisterous and profligate company, taught him the vices of the city without its civilities.

Such was the hopeful youth for whom Mr. O'Neil would willingly have nullified the privileges of his first-born. Yet, even here, his partiality could hardly be referred to affection for the cadet. It was in fact the effect of self-love in Mr. O'Neil; for, though his bodily eyes could not perceive Gerald Fitzmaurice's resemblance in outward feature to himself, his *mind* could see its own likeness

in the dark and tortuous mind of the Angry Boy. He admired his arrogance and presumption, which he called self-defensive pride; his dishonesty and falsehood, which he considered worldly sagacity; his love of secrecy, which he termed prudence; his contempt for all the decent charities of life, which he rejoiced in as a glorious exemption from vulgar prejudices: in short, he approved of all his evil qualities, because they were his own, in even exaggerated ugliness. But enough, for the present, of this rare specimen of "the blood of the O'Neils."

CHAPTER II.

Ty hvarje stund i dödligheten
Af tiden mäts ochhar sin gräns,
Men dödens kyss och kärlekens
De äro barn af evigheten.
The Swedish Poet, Esaias Tegnér.

To all things else the sun beneath
A bound is set by Time's decree;
But the kiss of Love and kiss of Death,
Are children of eternity.
Translation by Oscar Baker.

The time was drawing near for Gerald Fitzmaurice's ordination, so anxiously expected by his father. Nothing had been omitted, either on his own part or that of his instructors, to qualify him for so important a procedure; and in every point but the most essential one he *was* qualified. But his inclinations had undergone a thorough change; he could no longer deceive himself; he felt that he had mistaken his early sensibilities, that he had not the requisite vocation to the sacred ministry, and, when once he was self-assured of this fact, he resolved to abandon the project. His conscience and his really strong religious feelings rendered it impossible for him to do otherwise.

He had become intimate at Douay with several of his countrymen, some of whom were fugitive rebels; and he had not been long in imbibing the political notions of his friends, whose fervour and impetuosity of character assorted but too well with his own. He was about to return, therefore, to his native shores with no very favourable sentiments towards the government, which, according to his judgment, misruled his country as much as it insulted his faith. When his exiled compatriots bade him farewell, it was not without dark intimations from them that he might soon see some of them again on their native soil, in spite of the penalties that warned them off.

Fitzmaurice announced to his superiors the conviction to which he had come, of his unworthiness for sacerdotal functions, and respectfully solicited permission to depart. They were disconcerted; but he was firm, and all remonstrance was vain. He received their blessing, and affectionately took his leave. So prompt were his movements, that in a few days he was under his father's roof, and the first to break to him the unwelcome intelligence of the subversion of that cherished scheme; though, as yet, Fitzmaurice was unsuspicious of the godless and unnatural motive that had doomed him to the priesthood. The disappointed parent turned pale with disgust, but uttered not one word either of welcome or reproach.

Aubrey Buller, the Angry Boy, had gone to Dublin some days before, on one of his graceless courses.

While Fitzmaurice, mortified, and somewhat indignant, at the coldness of his father's reception after so long a separation, was yet standing in the presence of Mr. O'Neil, who sat sullenly cushioned in an old arm-chair, a servant ushered in two morning visiters, Sir Guy Vernon and Mr. Sullivan. Visiters were so few in Mr. O'Neil's house (he was so unpopular), that he was always "at home." With Sir Guy the reader is already acquainted. Mr. Sullivan was a *Squireen;* he was a hero of the Curragh, where he seldom failed to cheat and beat his betters; the soul of every gambling-table, where his successes seemed miraculous, yet never made him rich; and the adhesive friend of Sir Guy, whom he mystified with the most incredible effrontery.

Mr. O'Neil rose with unwonted alacrity to receive his guests; he extended both his hands to Sir Guy, and so gave him a double welcome: he made a stately inclination of the head to Mr. Sullivan, requested both to be seated, and ensconced himself again in his own huge chair. After some further commonplace interchange of civilities, Sir Guy, who never felt at home in "the old Jacobite's den," was glad to find in the person of Fitzmaurice a subject for eking out a conversation that was already becoming barren, though the shortest term of a decent visit of courtesy was not completed. After attentively eyeing Fitzmaurice for some moments, "Mr. O'Neil," said he, "you have not introduced me to your son; for I am quite sure, from what I can remember of him when he was a child, and from his remarkable likeness to you, that this young gentleman is your eldest son."

"What!" interrupted Sullivan, "is this the young priest?"

"You are right, Sir Guy," replied Mr. O'Neil, somewhat nettled; "that is my son, Mr. Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil; but, as to his likeness to me, I see nothing of it; you really flatter me."

"Not at all, not at all," cried Sullivan, with the grandest of emphatic brogues; "the baronet speaks the truth, allowing for the difference of age: he is a true chip of the old block, and not so much handsomer than his father either, barring the comeliness of the young man's eyes and his good-natured-looking face. What a pity that he should be a priest!"

"I am not a priest, sir," said Fitzmaurice, coldly.

"I beg your reverence's pardon," rejoined Sullivan; "but you are to be, and that's all the same."

Fitzmaurice did not think it worth while to answer; but Mr. O'Neil took that opportunity of venting his displeasure at his son's return and its cause; addressing himself to Sir Guy, for he disdained Sullivan on account of his vulgarity and supposed insignificance. "That youth, sir, has done me the honour to absent himself from home for eight years, to receive a first-rate and most expensive education in a foreign college, because it was his own choice to prepare himself for the priesthood; and he, to-day, comes back and tells me, without notice or ceremony, that he has changed his mind. But he will think better of it."

"Excuse me, sir," said Fitzmaurice, proudly, "my mind has not been so lightly changed."

"Ay, ay," exclaimed Sullivan, a shrewd malicious fellow, who began to guess at the true state of the matter, "the young man may be right, and a very decent young man he is. One man may lead a horse to the pond, you know, Mr. O'Neil, but twenty won't make him drink. So your son seems to have no taste for holy water. Well, you see you've done your best to give him a chance of being canonized; but it isn't in the blood of the O'Neils — they were always devils of fellows."

The laugh with which Sullivan tried to carry off this sally did not cover its insolence, which Mr. O'Neil strongly felt, though he had brought it on himself by his stiff affectation of overlooking Sullivan as a person beneath his notice.

"But where's your brother, Mr. Gerald?" continued the latter; "where's your brother Aubrey? may be he'd like to step into your shoes, since you've kicked them off; he'd make a pleasant father-confessor to the women; he's the devil's own boy, that Aubrey."

"Thank you, sir," interposed the stately Mr. O'Neil.

"Oh, it's not *that* I'm meaning at all, Mr. O'Neil," said Sullivan. "I ask your pardon, sir; but there's many a true word said in jest."

Sir Guy could not help smiling at the awful stare with which Mr. O'Neil now regarded Sullivan; but he was gentleman enough to feel that his friend's familiarity was in "bad taste," and he saw that Fitzmaurice, too, was beginning to look doubtful whether he ought not to be offended; therefore, turning to the latter, whom he was inclined to like since he had heard that he refused to be made one of "the Pope's Irish ministers," he proposed to him to accompany them in their ride to Dromore. Fitzmaurice, willing to move, ordered his brother's horse, and in a few minutes they were gone.

Mr. O'Neil, though glad to be relieved from such a visiter as Sullivan, was by no means satisfied with Gerald's ride to Dromore. He felt that Aubrey Buller's horse should have had his owner on his back when the rider took that direction. He immediately wrote a letter to Aubrey, desiring him to return without delay, for very especial reasons; but, as the reasons were not stated, the summons had little chance of being attended to till it suited the caprice or convenience of the Angry Boy to come home. In effect, he did not return for four months, in spite of several urgent repetitions of his father's orders; making various excuses at first, and none at all latterly, till he required a fresh supply of money; and then he wrote with all humility, explained that he had been confined by a fever for several weeks to his bed, and that he had refrained from giving his honoured parent uneasiness on the subject till he could inform him, as he then could, that all danger was over, and that he would be able to travel in a few days. The truth was, that, in a brawl at the theatre, (he was always in brawls,) he had been roughly handled according to his deserts, and kicked out into the street, where he was again so severely beaten, that he was carried almost insensible to his lodging, where he continued in a crippled state for above a month.

These four months were the happiest of Gerald Fitzmaurice's existence. Mary Vernon has been described; and it will be readily

believed that Gerald's first visit to Dromore, under the flattering auspice of her own father's introduction, was followed by many others. Circumstances soon concurred to confirm the favourable impression which two young persons of amiable manners, with the fewest possible objects of attraction around them, could hardly fail to make on each other at their first interview. Accidentally meeting her a few days afterwards in one of her walks, Fitzmaurice availed himself so well of that opportunity to improve their acquaintance, that Mary thought it the most delightful ramble she had ever taken. After this, they occasionally fell in with each other in their excursions; and whenever Fitzmaurice attended her home, which he now and then ventured to do, his kind reception by Lady Vernon flattered and encouraged him. Lady Vernon, too, frequently rode out with her daughter; and Fitzmaurice, who was constantly exploring the country on horse-back, seldom missed them. If he did not always join them,—for a fit of bashful reserve, or timid humility, would sometimes restrain him,—yet he saw Mary at least for a moment; and a word, a smile, a nod, are substantial food for a lover's reveries for hours after. On wet days, which were but too frequent, he was restless and impatient, now wandering without an aim throughout the endless apartments and passages of the gloomy old mansion of his fathers, now mounting his horse, and galloping against wind and rain to look upon Mary's home; then, as if afraid of approaching too near, wheeling off at a quickened pace, and making a circuit to look upon the sea, whose turbid breast seemed an image of his own, and whose turbulence enchanted him like his own wild feelings.

The first time that he saw her in public, she was at a ball in the town of Sligo, where he was more than ever struck with the graces of her figure, which raised her above all comparison with the fairest in the room. A day or two afterwards, he presented to her a copy of "the Rape of the Lock," on a blank leaf of which he had written the following lines, without, I fear, being candid enough to acknowledge a plagiarism in the first stanza, from Soame Jenyns, an author whom she was not likely to know.

TO MARY DANCING.

Diana's queen-like step is thine,
And when in dance thy feet combine
They fall with truth so sweet,
The music seems to come from thee,
And all the notes appear to be
The echoes of thy feet.

And every limb with all the notes
In that accordant beauty floats
And careless air of chance,
That 'tis a rapture to behold
Thee thus, with waving locks of gold,
The very soul of Dance.

The loveliness so rich before
Puts on a thousand graces more
In that inspiring maze;
Like jewels brighter when in motion,
Or sunshine on the waves of ocean
Alive with trembling rays.

Mary read this little tribute to her charms with all the delightful flutter of the bosom with which such praise is for the first time received by the young and unpractised girl from an object who is dearer to her than she knows; and when Fitzmaurice at their next meeting urged her to reward him with a lock of her own hair, he did not find her quite so tenacious as Belinda was of "the best and favourite curl," nor even deeply resentful when he presumed to imprint upon her cheek the first kiss of a pure and manly affection.

CHAPTER III.

How pleasant the banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow!
There oft, as mild Evening sweeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.
Burns.

A CHANGE of manner soon began to be observable in Mary. At times she seemed no longer the giddy girl, fresh as the strawberry just ripened on the sunny slope beneath her window, and blithe as the young thrush that was pecking at the fruit. The animation of her cheek and eye often deserted her. She appeared to court solitude, and frequently rode to the coast, where, dismissing her pony and attendant to a hut about half a mile distant, she would take her station on some stupendous cliff, and sit for hours gazing on the tumultuous mass of waters, and indulging the spirit of her thoughts till her heart was full, almost to oppression, with a sweet and melancholy pleasure. And this was happiness! exquisite happiness!

The hut just alluded to as the place where her servant waited on these occasions, was occupied by the parents of a poor blind boy named Conolly, who was in the habit of wandering from house to house, every where welcome for the sake of his pipe, on which he played the favourite Irish airs with wonderful power and feeling. He was especially befriended by Fitzmaurice, among whose relatives he had been a sort of petted familiar, almost a household superstition, from his

childhood ; and he was also as much a favourite at Dromore.

When it chanced that he was at home on the arrival of Mary's horses and servant, he would sometimes steal away to the coast, where he well knew how to find her, and he would exert his delightful art while she melted into tears. This was no intrusion on her solitude; it seemed merely setting her own sweet and lonely thoughts to music.

Gerald Fitzmaurice did not always suffer her to enjoy this luxury without participation. He grew bolder in his approaches, by degrees, as he was more and more convinced that the prize was really worth winning, and willing to be won. He became a still more constant visiter at Dromore, where he was civilly enough received by Sir Guy, when he happened to be in the way, and always frankly welcomed by Lady Vernon, who frequently invited him to dinner. His walks with Mary were more frequent than before, and Lady Vernon was seldom particular in her inquiries as to the cause of her daughter's protracted absence on these occasions. In such intimate association they passed many hours of many weeks delightfully, and Fitzmaurice was every day more enchanted with the charms of his companion, and her peculiar graceful originality of manner and expression, which was even more captivating than her beauty. But he could not but be conscious that Sir Guy might not, with his Orange party-spirit, be at all willing to have a Catholic son-in-law.

And here was the luckless blot in Mary's conduct. She deceived her father, and was not ingenuous with her mother. Nothing is more common than this sort of dissimulation in a daughter towards a parent. The delight of a new emotion, of which she dreads the security, and perhaps doubts the propriety, makes her a dissembler ; and, from the moment that she has become one at home, she has abandoned her surest footing, and walks on quicksands at her peril, with but a blind guide, even if the new acquaintance, the lover of yesterday, be in truth a lover, as Fitzmaurice *was*, and not one of the heartless herd of flatterers who infest the social walks of life, and sun their own paltry vanity, or mercenary hopes still more paltry, in the smiles of inexperienced and credulous girlhood.

Among their favourite walks, was a little spot which they called *the Well among the Mountains*, whose spring was believed to possess a holy virtue, and to which the country people, therefore, resorted on the anniversary of Saint Patrick, to whom it was dedicated. Except on that day of pilgrimage it was little frequented, but by Mary and Fitzmaurice ; and the redbreast, singing to himself, was usually the only preoccupant they found. This rustic shrine, with its most rudely carved little crucifix of wood, in its quiet nook, may be still seen within its circular shade of sycamores and thorns, and its bubbling waters still tinkle as of yore,

> — — basined in an unsunned cleft,
> A beauteous spring, the rock's collected tears.

These flowery days were sweet and transient. The persons of whom Sir Guy's convivial parties consisted, were not in general such as Fitzmaurice would have chosen for his associates, had not the powerful attraction of Mary's home drawn him among them. He was almost the only Roman Catholic gentleman who visited at Dromore. The majority of Sir Guy Vernon's accustomed guests were violently set against his religion and its professors, and sometimes, in their anti-popish zeal, over the baronet's claret, forgot that a papist was present.

The most offensive of these guests to the "Romish youth" was Mr. Sullivan ; but *he* never forgot himself or Fitzmaurice. He was deliberately and grossly virulent in his general sarcasms on Papists whenever Fitzmaurice was one of the company at Dromore, though he took care to avoid personality. He had soon looked on Gerald with contempt when he discovered that he could be made nothing of in his line ; that he did not play at cards, nor bet on them, nor even amuse himself at billiards, and that the racing calendar formed no part of his erudition. But his contempt was quickly sharpened into bitter hostility for a reason which Fitzmaurice would hardly have guessed at. Mr. Sullivan, who was forty, about the age of Sir Guy, had long ago made up his mind that Mary Vernon, not yet eighteen, should be his wife, though he was as yet cautious not to betray his views, while he sedulously promoted them by means not easily penetrable. He paid no marked attention to Miss Vernon, but he laboured day and night to get her unsuspecting father into his power. He was acute enough to discover presently that he had a formidable rival in Fitzmaurice, and, from the moment that he had arrived at that conviction, he was his enemy, and watched for his overthrow. He well knew how to work upon Sir Guy.

Fitzmaurice shortly perceived, to his un-

speakable mortification, that Sir Guy Vernon was, on the point of religion, quite as illiberal as any of his friends, and a thousand little circumstances convinced him, that, whatever kindness he might hope for from Lady Vernon, no argument would ever make her husband favourable to the wish that had sprung up, at first almost insensibly, and had now grown into impassioned strength, in his breast. As his alarm on this subject became excited, his tenderness for Mary grew more confirmed and exclusive. His passion now appeared to him like a forbidden worship, secret, difficult, and perilous; and, like all prohibited rites, was the more religiously respected in proportion to its difficulty, and the more fondly cherished in consideration of its danger.

He soon received proof that his anxiety was well grounded. Some rumour of an organized insurrection in the southern parts of the province reached Dromore late one night, when a large party, after supper, was at the height of convivial enjoyment. Fitzmaurice was unfortunately present. Inspired by their native nectar — the favourite poison distilled in the secret wilds of the opposite coast of Donegal—some of Sir Guy's friends waxed eloquent on the subject of "rebellion and popery." Fitzmaurice was the only sober man of the company, for he was not yet reconciled to the fumid odour of illicit whisky, and he had contrived to evade the summary law by which the guest, whether willing or not, was formerly bound to drink at the pleasure of his host. He heard in silent forbearance the drunken ravings of bigotry, and even sat without betraying his disgust while "loyal songs" were sung to the tunes of "The Boyne Water" and "The Pope and the Devil;" but when Sir Guy himself exerted his vocal powers on a song of which the words were in the highest degree exasperating, and which was set to the insulting air of "Croppies, lie down," Fitzmaurice rose and quitted the house in fury and despair. The intoxication of the party prevented much notice of his abrupt departure, and they probably the next morning forgot what had occurred. But he rode home in an evil hour.

CHAPTER IV.

Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes;
That when I note another man like him
I may avoid him. *Shakspere.*

FITZMAURICE, at his father's hall-door, resigned his horse to a groom, received the drowsy footman's welcome and a bed-chamber light without remark, hurried across the hall, and ascended the stair-case towards his chamber in silence. When near the extremity of a gallery that led to his apartment, he paused at a few paces from his father's room, which was exactly opposite. There were lights in that room, and he heard voices. This was unusual; it was considerably past midnight, and Mr. O'Neil was seldom spoken to or seen after ten o'clock. Some internal monitor seemed to tell him that he must watch and listen: he did *not* listen; a more powerful monitor made him disdain the suggestion: he advanced rapidly to his father's door, knocked, and immediately opened it. His brother, Aubrey Buller, stood before him; and dark was the scowl with which Fitzmaurice was greeted by the Angry Boy.

His father was seated, and frowned at the interruption. "Mr. Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil," said he, "you are unceremonious. I am not used to uninvited visiters in my own apartment after midnight. Where do you come from, sir?"

"Sir," replied Fitzmaurice, "I come from Dromore. The strangeness of seeing lights and hearing voices at this late hour in your chamber occasioned the trespass, which I beg you will excuse, especially as it affords me this unexpected meeting with my brother. When did you arrive, Aubrey? But my father is tired — come with me to my room. Good-night, sir."

The two brothers quitted their father's apartment, and Fitzmaurice led the way to his own; but when he reached his door he was alone: Aubrey Buller had sulkily evaded his invitation. "Still the same incorrigible Angry Boy!" murmured Fitzmaurice, and slammed his door harshly to, for it may be supposed that he was in no very placid humour.

Stung to the quick with all the vexations of the day and night, it was long before he fell into a slumber — a most uneasy one, from which he was presently roused. He heard a stealthy step, and saw a dim light: his door was slowly opened. his curtain drawn, and the Angry Boy stood at his bedside, his lamp in one hand, a pistol in the other.

"Aubrey! good God! what is the matter?" exclaimed Fitzmaurice.

"What, sir! you are awake?" replied the intruder. "The matter is, that I abhor you, Gerald! You have broken your pact with us. You were to be a priest, and I was to be what the accident of a year or two's

seniority may enable you to prevent my ever being, if I am fool enough to submit to your caprice — the future master of these lands. You must go to Dromore, too; you pretend to the heiress, I suppose! Take that, to settle all disputes!" and the fellow actually levelled the pistol at his brother's head, and pulled the trigger; but there was no explosion. He flung the pistol on the bed, and disappeared with the expression of countenance of a baffled fiend.

Was this a dream? a nightmare? Alas, no! Fitzmaurice provided himself with a light, and examined the pistol: it was loaded, and he drew the charge — the ball had been inserted before the powder. Whether, as is most probable, this was done intentionally, that the Angry Boy might vent his malice by alarming his naked and defenceless brother with a paltry trick of tragic farce, or in the blind and blundering agitation of superlative guilt of purpose, it is impossible to decide. Fitzmaurice was disposed to attribute it to a momentary paroxysm of insanity in his brother. He put on a dressing-gown, and followed to his chamber. He found him already in bed, and apparently fast asleep! He did not disturb him, but returned to his own room, taking the precaution this time to lock his door before he got into bed again. The narrator of this incident, to whom Fitzmaurice mentioned it the next day, never afterwards beheld the Angry Boy without the steady conviction that he was a Cain, without Cain's courage. Aubrey Buller would, in his opinion, have been an appalling curiosity of wickedness, had his hand dared to act up to the audacity of his will; but his nerve failed him, and he was therefore a mere vulgar villain, a pettifogging blusterer.

Perhaps, however, Fitzmaurice was not far from the truth in believing his brother to have been mad upon this occasion. We are told * of a tribe of savages in South America, who were subject to a sort of fury which they called by the unpronounceable name of *Nakaiketergehes*. It was "manifestly that deliberate sort of madness which may be cured by the certainty of punishment. A chief effectually put a stop to the disease by proclaiming that the first person who was seized with it should be put to death." Madmen of the above species are not uncommon in Europe. The Angry Boy was often seized with the *Nakaiketergehes*.

Several days elapsed. Not a word of explanation passed between the brothers; not an allusion on either side to the strange fact just recorded. They met with coldness, but without incivility. Aubrey pretended to be utterly unconscious of any particular occurrence having taken place between them. Gerald would have forgotten it if he could, but that was impossible. He had heard as well as seen too much: Aubrey's address to him had been but too clear and too astounding a commentary on his father's repulsive manner, though the latter was of course neither privy to nor subsequently made acquainted with Aubrey's attempt, or pretended attempt, at assassination. Gerald now knew why his father's house was to him no home, and he had made the discovery at the moment when the only other house in the wide world where he could have desired to find a substitute for home seemed closed to him by the intolerable bigotry whose excesses of tongue in excess of drink had driven him forth from it.

It has been said that several of his familiar friends at Douay were disaffected Irishmen. Some of these maintained a correspondence with him, of which the matter was often indiscreet and dangerous. There was no sophistry untried to persuade him that he could only prove himself "a good Irishman" by setting his allegiance at nought. He was no very loyal subject when he left Douay. His ill reception by his father, the unnatural conduct of his brother, and the insolence of his Orange neighbours, all seemed to goad him to break the yoke of social observances, and stand out in some independent character. Then, the evident partiality of the poorer classes for him, their confidence in his goodwill, and their officious devotedness of manner, with their well-known and hardly suppressed hatred of most of their other superiors in condition, seemed to tell him that he was the elected of their hope, and that he had returned to his country for some sterner purpose than that of sighing for an Orange bigot's daughter. Just then, when the high excitement of a wounded mind laid him open to any wild temptation, the tempter came:

Fitzmaurice was in his gloomy little study, musing at the small window that looked upon a dead wall of the courtyard, when a servant knocked, and announced a visiter. He turned round, and beheld Mr. Carew Dillon, the most intimate of his Douay friends, and correspondents. This person, though very young, had already contrived to make himself

* By Southey, in his History of Brazil, vol. iii. p. 412, quarto edition, quoting Dobrizhoffer.

distinguished, for he was one of the Irishmen especially exempted from pardon in a proclamation from Dublin Castle, dated about two years back, after the suppression of a revolt in Kerry.

"Dillon! you here! how can you be so rash? What can you expect?"

"Sanctuary."

"That you shall have. But will it hold good, proclaimed as you are?"

"True; but I am not known in this part of Ireland."

"But consider how my father may be compromised. I do not believe you could remain undiscovered with us a month — not a week."

"I ask not for refuge so long. I want nothing but rest for eight hours, and then it will be dark, and you and I can follow our vocation."

"What is that, Dillon?"

"Mine to lead you to 'the friends of the West,' your genuine Connaught Rangers, and yours to become their leader. All the country will be up in arms. You are depended on for this part of your district."

"But can you be in earnest? Such precipitation too! Gently, Dillon, let us hear more."

It has been said that "the woman who deliberates is lost." So is the man, when the cause is bad, and when he knows it to be so before his deliberation begins. Dillon had been in the neighbourhood some time, and now explained to him, at great length, all that had been done, what preparations were made, what the objects aimed at, and his reasons for being confident of success.

In less than eight hours after the commencement of their conference, the two friends quitted the house together, but not before the Angry Boy had quietly opened the door, and looked in upon them for an instant with a grin of delight, and his peculiar chuckle.

In less than two hours after their departure, Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil was a sworn-in rebel and a leader of rebels.

Several of the treasonable letters that he had received since his arrival in Ireland were already in the hands of the government authorities, by the exemplary loyalty of the Angry Boy, who had stolen them, read them, and forwarded them to the Castle. But why did this amiable specimen of human nature grin with delight when he saw Fitzmaurice and Dillon closeted together? Because Dillon was a traitor to his friend, as traitors to their country not unusually are; and the meeting, and the preparations for it, and the result, had all been concerted between them, between the Angry Boy and the Douay Patriot, Carew Dillon! The latter, having felt the inconveniences of proscription, had been willing to make his peace by becoming a government spy, and the former was in hopes of getting rid of his elder brother by the hangman.

CHAPTER V.

> They all are met!
> From the lakes and from the fens,
> From the rocks and from the dens,
> From the woods and from the caves,
> There are they.
> *Ben Jonson.*

The disturbances of which there had already been rumours from the Southern parts of the province of Connaught began now to threaten more nearly; and nightly meetings were held in Tyreragh to an extent that was alarming.

The visits of Gerald Fitzmaurice to Dromore had entirely ceased, a circumstance inexplicable to Lady Vernon and her daughter, both of whom had retired long before the drunken orgies commenced on that night when Fitzmaurice quitted their mansion in such unmitigated disgust. Sir Guy made no comment whatever on his absence. Another circumstance soon perplexed the ladies still more.

One night the tramp of many horses was heard along the public road with which the avenue was connected. Sir Guy was in some agitation, being as yet but ill prepared to defend his house against attack, to which he knew himself to be obnoxious on account of the intolerant bravados in which he and his friends had been more than usually indulging of late. Presently, a single horseman cantered up the avenue, threw a letter over the inner lodge gate, and then, retiring immediately, joined the troop who had formed up near the first lodge, but now peaceably continued their course along the road. The letter was brief, and written in a strange hand; it ran thus: —

"Sir Guy Vernon is faithfully assured of the safety of himself and his family. Whatever contrary suspicion appearances may suggest, not a creature of his household will be molested, nor the smallest injury done on the estate of Dromore."

This friendly cartel from the enemy somewhat fortified Sir Guy, who had half resolved

on the risk of attempting to remove his family to Dublin till the event of the impending storm should be decided. For some days, however, no precaution was laid aside, and none of the family ventured to stir abroad, except Sir Guy, whose duty frequently called him to a meeting of magistrates at a distance. Sir Guy Vernon had a better grounded conjecture than he told as to the quarter from which the pledge of his security had come; and nothing short of a recommendation of an urgent nature from high authority could have imposed silence on a man of his communicative turn.

A requisition had been forwarded to the military commander of the district, for a body of troops for the barony of Tyreragh; but, as the indications of disaffection were general throughout the province and several adjoining counties, none had yet arrived, some difficulty having been found in the distribution of the small force which the General had at his disposal. In the meantime, considerable numbers of armed peasants were known to assemble nightly very near to Dromore, but no act of violence or depredation had been committed there, though arms had been forcibly taken from the houses of almost every other landowner's protestant tenantry in that and the adjacent baronies, and in some instances from the mansions of the landed proprietors themselves.

Fears of personal danger gradually subsiding in Sir Guy's establishment, Mary, whom confinement and the absence of Fitzmaurice rendered miserable, was allowed to take her accustomed walks. She was almost idolized by the surrounding tenantry, and, so far as her own safety was concerned, had never entertained any fear at all. But the conduct of Fitzmaurice was unaccountable to her; and, as she wandered again among the scenes of her childhood, she felt that their charm was no longer the same. He whose presence had of late afforded her in her walks or rides a novelty of delight of which she was too inexperienced in the subtleties of love to analyse the cause, was no longer at her side, and every prospect looked dreary and forlorn. She had, one day, in this mournful state of spirits, rode towards the sea-shore, and sent her pony home, saying that she would return on foot.

> Lovelier than Naïad by the side
> Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere
> Sole sitting by the shores of old Romance,

she sat down on the edge of one of the dark frightful precipices of Altbõ, and the grandeur of the scenes around her could not divest her thoughts of their deep sadness. At her feet the waters of the Atlantic dashed against the rocks, and receded with hoarse unceasing murmurs. Before her, across the heaving waters, the mountains of Donegal rose, purple in the distance. On the left swelled her own wild height, the Hill of the Heart, and on her right Knocknaree and Benbulbin. The strong beams of the sun were darted under and between rich masses of dark clouds. The broad decided lines and sheets of light thus thrown upon the hills and waves gave them a magical character. Any mind but the love-struck mind of Mary might have been enchanted. But scenery, however sublime, and however efficient to raise for awhile the spirit that droops under worldly troubles, cannot win a youthful heart from the earnest tenderness with which it dwells on its first and most spiritual passion. It rather co-operates with solitude to strengthen, and almost to sanctify, the feeling.

The love of a young woman (such love as deserves the name) is no sordid calculation of selfish interests; the happiness of its object is her first, her own the second consideration, only depending on the first. It is this absence of self, this generous devotedness in woman, that makes her first passion so pure and so delightful.

Every thing near her reminded Mary Vernon of the absence of Fitzmaurice. On that very rock where she was now seated he had, at various times, read to her the Odes of Collins, the Pastor Fido of Guarini, and St. Pierre's affecting tale of the Mauritius. Along that coast they had often strayed together, and often had she ventured too near the edges of the precipice to be secretly delighted with his vigilance in drawing her away, and his reproachful petulance in exaggerating her temerity. From one of the neighbouring acclivities most difficult of access, he had procured for her a young merlin-hawk, having heard her express a wish to possess one of those beautiful birds. It had grown so tame under her care as frequently to fly after her in her rambles, sometimes perching on her neck, yet showing all its native fierceness to strangers, and permitting the familiarity of no one but its mistress. In short, there was not a spot around her which had not been endeared, of late, beyond its early charm, by some association with Fitzmaurice. She had continued musing on the pleasures that were past, till her dejection became insupportable, and she rose to return home. On looking at

the sun she was astonished to find him in the west, and her watch converted her surprise into agitation, by showing her the lateness of the hour. She resolved to hurry home; but a disappointment that weighed down her mind seemed also to retard her steps; for, however unreasonable the expectation, she had almost unconsciously indulged a hope of encountering Fitzmaurice on his favourite coast. The shades of evening were gathering fast, as she entered the avenue of oaks, whose usual gloom was already nearly deepened into the obscurity of midnight. Appalled at the darkness, and eager to terminate the solicitude that her long absence must have occasioned, she was hastening on, when a well-known voice arrested her, and fixed her in amazement to the spot—"Mary!" And the hand of Fitzmaurice held hers while he spoke: "Pity and forgive a wretch whose destiny forces him from you, and hurries him to destruction. I would say, forget me too, but I cannot bear that Mary should quite forget me. You will be told——"

He was proceeding, when the swift approach of horsemen was heard. He raised to his lips the hand which he had taken, and in a moment vanished. Poor Mary remained motionless till the horsemen came up; and, in the exclamation of inquiry which they uttered, she recognized the voices of two of her father's servants who had been sent in quest of her, and had met each other in returning from their unsuccessful search. In a state of emotion, easily imagined, she preceded them to the house, and rushed into the arms of her mother. Lady Vernon was prepared to reprove her, and began to inquire peremptorily into the cause of an absence so extraordinary; but the excited girl burst into tears and entreated to be spared. The tears of Mary were ever irresistible, and at once silenced both question and reproach from the too indulgent mother.

Sir Guy was gone to Sligo on magisterial business, and was not expected back for two days.

Mary retired to her chamber as early as she could, to pass a wakeful and a weary night, during which she was often obliged to counterfeit repose, when a soft tread and an approaching light warned her that her kind mother was coming to see whether she slept.

In the morning she rose early, and immediately turned her steps into the avenue of oaks, the place of her sudden interview with Fitzmaurice. As she lingered under the solemn shade, with a mind enfeebled by consternation and grief, she was startled by every gust of air among the trees, and almost expected the very leaves of her own oaks to become vocal, like those in the fabled grove of Dodona, and to breathe terrible oracles in the same accents which had pierced her heart on the preceding night.

A fear of giving offence or uneasiness to her mother made her subdue, during the rest of that day, an impatient longing to return to the gloom and solitude of her oaks. But every succeeding hour appeared more insufferably long and wretched than that which went before it; and her uncertainty as to the fate of Fitzmaurice was fretted into anguish. Mary was a novice in the school of sorrow, and therefore the more sensibly felt the harshness of its inflictions. A spoiled, though an amiable girl, who had been gratified from infancy in almost every caprice, she had never been practically taught the lesson of patience; and now, when, for the first time in her life, that virtue became essentially necessary for her peace, she was unequal to the fortitude that could have commanded it, and pined after lost enjoyment, and vainly quarrelled with her lot, as the newly-fettered eaglet, the native of her own hills, frets for the freedom of his wing, and struggles to break the chain that keeps him from the heaven to which he directed his earliest flights so gladly.

CHAPTER VI.

> I hear my love, and him I see
> Come leaping by the mountains there;
> Lo, o'er the hillocks trippeth he,
> And roe or stag-like doth appear.
> Lo, from behind the wall he pries;
> Now at the window grate is he:
> Now speaks my dear, and says, "Arise,
> My love, my fair, and come to me!"
>
> *George Wither.*

The next day Sir Guy Vernon returned, and the intelligence that he brought completed the misery of his daughter, and struck Lady Vernon with dismay. Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil had joined the rebels at ——, and two or three hundred of his father's tenants had followed him. A considerable body of troops was in motion to attack them, and it was confidently expected that the insurgents would be put down before they could concentrate much strength in that portion of the island. For some time Fitzmaurice had been an object of attention to the Government, on account of the correspondence purloined and transmitted by his brother; and

the sheriff of the county had even, within a few days past, received from Dublin Castle directions, which he privately communicated to the magistrates, to use every exertion to arrest him. Accordingly, Sir Guy among the number had been secretly on the watch to have him secured; but Fitzmaurice had now such good information, and took such measures of precaution, as effectually baffled all their vigilance.

Among the guardians over his safety, the least suspected, yet not the least efficient, was the poor blind boy, Conolly. His activity in moving from place to place was unwearied, and the facility with which he made his way without a guide was very remarkable. Every hint which he could catch from conversation he had sagacity enough to make the most of. An uncle of Fitzmaurice, now dead, had been his best friend. Mary Vernon often detained him for hours together to play to her in her garden; and Fitzmaurice himself had never suffered him to feel the loss of his patron as to bounty. So much was not required to bind an Irish peasant boy to a gentleman in misfortune.

It may be now understood why Sir Guy did not partake of the astonishment of his family on the abrupt disappearance of Fitzmaurice, and how he had been but little at a loss to ascribe to its true author the anonymous note that had been thrown over his gate. That note, however, though he relied on its assurance, in no degree mitigated the indignation which he had conceived against Fitzmaurice on being apprized of his treasonable practices. That he should so far use his influence with his followers as to prevent injury to the persons and property of a family whose hospitality he had experienced, was almost a matter of course in the fair and frank judgment of the baronet, but could by no means check his readiness and even eagerness as a loyal subject to deliver up a foe of the state to punishment.

It was not the smallest of poor Mary's trials that she was forced to hear the name she loved coupled with insult by her father, who, having no suspicion of her attachment, never perceived the sickness of soul that came over his child when he boasted of the caution with which he had kept his secret while endeavouring to execute his commission against Fitzmaurice.

Lady Vernon was not now so blind as her lord to their daughter's agitation and its cause. She had some time since observed a growing partiality between Mary and Fitzmaurice, and had even anticipated their future union with satisfaction, hoping to have influence enough over Sir Guy to surmount his anti-catholic prejudices. She had too much sense to be a bigot; and, as Fitzmaurice was well-born, well-educated, heir to a considerable fortune, and their immediate and much-respected neighbour, she could not think the difference in their Christian persuasions an insuperable objection to his becoming the husband of her child, though she knew it to be desirable that such difference did not exist. She had never dreamt that the civil disqualifications under which he and those of his church laboured for their religion, would produce the disastrous effect now made manifest; and her astonishment was equalled by her grief when she found that this prepossessing young person, whose manners were peculiarly mild and unambitious, cherished in a fiery temperament a fatal and daring spirit of disloyalty. A feeling of self-reproach for the encouraging reception she had always given him, now imparted something of indescribable tenderness to her compassion for her daughter. Mary felt it deeply; she now felt, too, that her interest in Fitzmaurice was no longer a secret from her mother: and, though not a word of explanation was exchanged between them, she had comfort in the consciousness of being understood, and pitied, and forgiven, and found a sad relief in being allowed, uninterrogated and uncensured, to shed her tears on the bosom of a parent.

Mary now passed a considerable portion of each morning in the avenue, where she walked with a quick and impatient step, watching for the return of the messenger who was daily despatched to the Post-office at Sligo, a distance of twelve miles. She was not long without intelligence concerning Fitzmaurice. After a few days —ages to her— an account arrived of an engagement in which the insurgents had been totally routed by the King's troops. Fitzmaurice, when all was over, had effected his escape from the field, or at least such was the general belief, as he was not recognised among the prisoners or killed, though he had been noticed in the act of attempting to rally a small body of the fugitives towards the close of the contest. The newspapers contained a proclamation offering rewards of various amount for the apprehension of such of the insurgent leaders as were supposed to have absconded; and on the list of proclaimed was the name of Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil, for the seizure of whom

the sum of a thousand pounds was offered. A mortal numbness of frame awhile arrested the sensibility to mental suffering in Mary after this was read. But the kindly stupor did not last long; and the unhappy girl was for some days in a state of horrible excitement that threatened to subvert her reason. The constant and judicious attention of her mother saved her from this worst calamity, and so touched the warm grateful heart of Mary, that, by efforts infinitely painful, she forced herself into an appearance of resignation in her presence.

But when alone, she gave way without reserve to the anguish of her heart. The image of the gallant lost Fitzmaurice, branded with ignominy, and pursued with relentless vengeance, was ever before her in her solitary hours. She seemed to have but one fearful hope left to her in the world; and that rested on the possibility of his evading pursuit and retiring into perpetual exile. There were moments when her generous little heart throbbed almost joyfully in the supposed realization of this dreary hope.

One morning, soon after daybreak, taking her accustomed walk in the avenue, where Conolly often lingered to soothe her with his music, and beyond which she no longer felt any desire to go, she was startled by a rustling sound, and instantly afterwards heard her name pronounced in the deep sweet tone that could not be mistaken. An involuntary cry had hardly escaped her when a letter fell at her feet; but so confounded was she with rapturous surprise, that perhaps it might have been unnoticed had not her attention been drawn to it by her merlin-hawk, who pounced upon it and began to tear it with his beak. She eagerly seized it, and, after looking fearfully about her, read the following words:

"A wretched outlaw ought not to obtrude his misery on the beautiful and innocent Mary. But he cannot flee from his native land for ever without imploring one last interview with almost the only person upon earth the forfeiture of whose society will make him regret the part he took in a just though unprosperous cause. To-morrow, concealed from observation, he will be apprised of any person's approach towards the shore of Altbō. In the evening he will embark, and, whether soothed in his parting hour by a kind farewell from Mary, or doomed to find his last entreaty rejected, he will trouble her peace no more.

"G. F."

After hastily perusing this note, Mary's fears were roused lest he should be discovered in his return to his hiding-place, as he must have received information of her habit of walking so early in the avenue, and had, no doubt, repaired thither before dawn with the hazardous determination to see her and to prefer his written request. Before she returned to the house, she ascended an eminence that overlooked the road and park and the adjacent fields; but her eyes in vain sought the object on whom they dreaded and longed to rest, and she retired with a tumultuous throbbing of the heart that was equally the effect of joy and consternation. During the remainder of the day, these feelings alternately preponderated, as the certainty that he lived and loved her, and his melancholy and dangerous situation, successively pressed upon her mind. As to a compliance with his wish she felt no hesitation. What will not a young woman do for her lover in his hour of desolation and sorrow?

CHAPTER VII.

> I will go,
> Softly tripping o'er the mees,
> Like the silver-footed doe
> Seeking shelter in green trees.
> *Chatterton.*

We often hear the old and the middle-aged speak with contempt of the sorrows of youth. "The young," they say, "can have few real griefs. It is for us, experienced in human difficulties, and burdened with many charges, to complain of the cares of life." There is more of overweening self-love than of true philosophy in this proposition. Experience in the world is too apt to chill and to contract the heart, deadening its generous sympathies, and narrowing its affections. As we increase in age we ripen in selfishness, and hence it is that the old think so little of the calamities of the young, and so much of their own.

With the various evils and reverses of fortune to which mankind are liable, the old are of course more familiar than the young, but they are not therefore more entitled to the gloomy privilege of acquaintance with care. Adversity takes many shapes; and those ideal ones in which it often appears to the fanciful and sensitive minds of youth are not the least terrible of its forms, nor the less baneful in their effects on happiness, because the cold eye of age can disenchant them of their horrors.

There is no kind of misfortune which is thought so frivolous by the old as a young person's first disappointment in her affections; but there is neither charity nor justice in this idea. A young and guileless woman, for instance, won by amiable qualities, possibly real, probably imaginary, yields up her heart to its first passion, imperceptibly to herself, perhaps, and secretly from all but the favoured object, who is never wholly deceived. Her tenderness, modest, yet most earnest, is for ever finding or creating in him some new quality in which to glory. He is her daily thought and nightly dream, far more, be it conceded, than any earthly object should ever be. Her native delicacy at times reproaches her that her heart should be thus absorbed in a sentiment which her tongue would not dare to confess. She struggles to subdue it, and it conquers her; and more than ever she cherishes it in her inmost soul, in a soul still hallowed by good and spotless thoughts, and into which the earthly idol was not admitted till freed by her fancy from the dross of human frailty and endowed with more than mortal attributes. Her life is bound up in him; and the hope of Youth, that sweet false prophet, whispers it a life of almost cloudless serenity. At that confiding moment, probably, the storm is nearest. It breaks, and overwhelms her. The interdiction, well or ill judged, of parents—the falsehood or misfortune of the lover—blights the young promise of her mind, and blights it perhaps for ever. This is no uncommon case; but the poor victim of disappointment, thus crushed where her sensibility was keenest, has no claim to the pity of the wise and aged, because "she has sustained no real loss, incurred none of the real cares of life!" A wider charity affords a juster view.

Age, by care opprest,
Feels for the couch, and drops into the grave.
The tranquil scene lies further far from youth.
Frenzied ambition and desponding love
Consume youth's fairest flowers. Compared with youth,
Age has a something, something like repose.*

At as early an hour on the following morning as Mary could quit the house without exciting remark or curiosity, she set forward with a beating heart. Numerous were the times that she paused and looked round to see if she were followed or observed. The lark that sprung from her feet startled and affrighted her, and the faint sound of her own quick footsteps seemed to be unusually loud, and likely to betray her course and its object to some enemy of Fitzmaurice. At length she arrived at the coast, and she had scarcely seated herself on one of the rocks overhanging the sea, when her expectation was roused by one of those shrill piercing whistles that the Irish peasants blow between their fingers, and by which they convey signals to a distance beyond which the blasts of a bugle-horn would hardly be heard. Though she could perceive no person near, she had not the least doubt but that this notice proceeded from some one in the confidence of Fitzmaurice; and, accordingly, in a few moments, she discerned her friend approaching round the beach below, not so disguised but that the quick eye of fondness knew him. He was dressed in the common garb of a sailor. He surmounted the steep with ease, and was almost immediately at the side of Mary, whose hand he took fervently and silently, and whom he at once conducted down the rocks by a descent dizzy and difficult, though somewhat less abrupt than the crags which he had climbed. Supported by the arm of Fitzmaurice, she felt no personal fear. When they had descended but a little way, they became enveloped as it were amid the dark cliffs, till, at a sudden turn, they found themselves, near the edge of a tremendous precipice, on a rock, which, jutting considerably beyond the rest, stretched over upon the ocean. This is the favourite haunt of the sea-fowl. At the appearance of Mary and Fitzmaurice, the birds started away with a simultaneous burst, and wheeled and hovered over them with loud melancholy screams, literally obscuring the air for some moments by the abrupt expansion of such a multitude of wings.

Large flocks of cormorants, with their long picturesque forms of shining jet, and gulls, with their white breasts and wild bright eyes and backs of ashy gray, have their nests in this part of the coast, and are to be seen promiscuously mingled along the rocks, to which they give an extraordinary appearance by their inconceivable numbers and the contrasts of their colours and shapes.

It was not the first time that Mary had ventured to this place with her companion. In more auspicious hours they had visited it together, and, among the solemn sights and sounds which it presented, had tempered down the giddy ecstasy of youthful enjoyment to the reflective sobriety in which true happiness is best felt and understood. In their

* Walter Savage Landor.

present altered condition, Fitzmaurice only found the place favourable to the darkest contemplations; and, as he stood with Mary on the brink of the abyss, after a long silence, he hastily turned to her, and, with a hurried but emphatical expression, borrowing the language of another enthusiast, exclaimed, "Do you remember the ancient use of the rock of Leucadia? This place resembles it in many respects: the rock is high, the water is deep, and I am in despair."

Mary did not shrink back at this dreadful question; she only clung more closely to his arm, as if resolute to share his fate, should he be so desperate as to decide it there. Fitzmaurice was the first to recover from this horrible state of mind, and snatched her away with trembling eagerness. "This place," said he, "is not good for us, Mary. These brown rocks look churlishly upon us, and these clamorous birds are shrieking their dismissal to me too harshly and too soon."

He supported her to the foot of the cliff, and, after walking for a short distance along the beach, turned into a deep recess formed by a chasm in the rock. Here they were quite concealed from observation from the land side, and could descry any vessel or boat that might appear on the sea, whose murmur was the only sound that now reached their ears.

There are, along this shore, several of these secluded inlets, which, notwithstanding the cries of the sea-birds resounding among the adjacent heights, are so silent and so lonely that they might seem to have had no visiters but the waves since the foundation of the world. Such was the tranquillity of the spot to which these lovers had now retired, and where they were about to undergo the agony of parting without hope of reunion. The majestic rocks were around and above them; the sun was in his glory, in the rich blue heaven; the green space of waters spread before them; and the waves, pursuing each other over the yellow sands, rippled at their feet. To happy lovers such a scene and such an hour would have "sent into the heart a summer feeling." To an exile, about to be cut off for ever from his native shore, where, in future, his very name would be a by-word of execration—except among the lowly and devoted peasants, whose wretchedness of condition had only been aggravated by the frantic plot in which he had encouraged them—except, too, with her who was, as yet for a little while, sitting pale and speechless at his side—to him, and to that young fond victim of his errors and her love, how did that sun shine in mockery, and that peaceful retreat invite to happiness in vain! They sate in the mute anguish of hopelessness, neither daring to address the other, lest the answer should be—farewell!

Fitzmaurice at last remembered that Mary was far from home, and that many reasons required the termination of this useless and afflicting interview. He addressed her in a voice almost inarticulate from emotion. "I resolved at all risks to see you, Mary, before my departure; and perhaps I owe my safety to this resolution; for a quarter where I am so well known is the last in which my enemies would expect to find me. I thought that it would be some alleviation to my misery if I could but be convinced that, in spite of my unworthiness, you had not entirely cast me off from your regard. I am already sufficiently punished for having so selfishly exposed you to the trial of this hour. I behold you, and I see indeed that you do not hate me, and I am at once torn with remorse and jealous foreboding. To think that the peace of a blameless mind like yours is to be poisoned by regret for a lost wretch like me, is horror: to consider that I see you for the last time, and that some other suitor, Mary, may soon teach you to forget the outcast, is distraction. Reason and conscience in vain persuade me that I ought, for the sake of your whole life's welfare, to desire to be forgotten. To-night I shall be abroad on the Atlantic. I shall never behold you more; but I shall hear that you are the bride of some better and happier man, and my yearning heart will torment me into madness."

"O, my unhappy friend," replied Mary, "how shall I convince you of the error of that fear? To-night you will be on the Atlantic—shall I go with you, Gerald, and break my mother's heart, and make the hearth of my father desolate?"

"No, lovely and generous girl; I will never lure you from your parents to follow the fortunes of an outlawed man. I am not so lost to honour as to tempt you to such a sacrifice and such a crime."

Overcome with agitation, Fitzmaurice burst into tears. Those of Mary had long been flowing; but when she saw her lover weep, she threw herself into his arms with a shriek of which the thrilling delirious agony was such that Fitzmaurice, for years afterwards, could not revert to this moment with-

out shuddering. She clung to his bosom with the energy of a maniac, while he soothed her with all the prodigality of fond expression.

They were suddenly alarmed by a screaming whistle, still more shrill and piercing than that which had given Fitzmaurice notice of Mary's arrival at the cliff.

"What can that sound mean?" whispered Mary, trembling; "it is surely the cry of a banshee; no human signal was ever so dreadful."

"It *is* the cry of my death-ghost, Mary," said Fitzmaurice, solemnly, after pausing to listen for a few seconds; "I am taken in the toils. Can Dillon have betrayed me? Now leave me, and God for ever and for ever bless you!"

"I will not leave you, Gerald," was the answer; and she twined her arms round him and listened. Then, suddenly disengaging herself, she exclaimed: "Fly, fly, Fitzmaurice; I hear the tread of many feet upon the sands."

"It is too late to fly," he replied; "the bloodhounds are too near: but let them not see you; remain in this cave, and I will meet them."

He kissed her cheek and rushed forward; but he dragged her with him, for she had again clung to his arm. At that instant a detachment of twelve foot-soldiers, with an officer, appeared, accompanied by two persons on horseback, Sir Guy Vernon (followed by a groom) and Mr. Sullivan. Fitzmaurice stood motionless, with Mary on his arm, till they came close up. Sir Guy's astonishment and rage, at finding his daughter in such a situation, it would not be easy to depict. He had never, till that instant, suspected her attachment.

Sullivan, however, had long more than suspected it, and it was through his importunity that Sir Guy was now present to be so effectually enlightened; for a twinge of remorse had almost prevented him from being of the party to seize Fitzmaurice, but Sullivan's representations of the importance of the presence of a magistrate at the capture had overruled him. It was Dillon who had given information to Sir Guy of Fitzmaurice's being concealed near the coast — but it was an anonymous note from the Angry Boy, who had played the spy with singular address, that had pointed out to Sullivan the exact spot where, in the course of that day, the outlaw might be expected to take boat for the ship which was to bear him off.

Sir Guy poured out a volley of execrations, and fiercely called on the soldiers to seize the papist traitor, Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil, whom he further insulted with abuse to which he received no answer. The officer had halted his men, and he now commanded them not to stir; and, walking singly up to Fitzmaurice, he said to him in a tone not unsoftened by compassion, "Sir, you are my prisoner." Fitzmaurice bent his head in acquiescence, while Mary precipitated herself towards her father, and implored him to have mercy, which was now not less far from his inclination than from his power. His only notice of her supplication was, "Take that wretched girl away, Sullivan, and see her home." This man, however, being determined not to lose sight of Fitzmaurice till the door of a cell in Sligo jail separated them, excused himself, and suggested that Miss Vernon would, under the circumstances, be best satisfied to be followed home by no one but her father's servant. To this Sir Guy assented, and, impatient of being in the presence of Fitzmaurice, he ordered his daughter to be gone, and his groom to follow her; and then told the officer that he would precede his party to the town, and inform the other magistrates of the capture; on which he rode off, without casting another look on any of the parties. Mary rushed to her lover, embraced him, and, instantly assuming a composed and even dignified air, turned to the servant and said, "You may come, for now I will go home." She did not trust herself to look back at Fitzmaurice, but retired with a quick step, attended by the groom, who had dismounted and now led his horse. The detachment of soldiers immediately proceeded with their prisoner in the opposite direction, towards the county town, Mr. Sullivan riding by them.

As soon as Miss Vernon had ascended to the cliff by the nearest bridle-way, she told the groom he might mount his horse. This led to a conversation, of which the substance was as follows, but the servant's share in it is given without its peculiar Irish phraseology, for want of skill in the writer to report it accurately: —

"It would be a strange sight if the servant rode while his master's daughter was on foot," said the man.

"There are stranger sights than that, Doolan. What did you see but now?"

"I saw a brave young rebel led away for justice."

"Sirrah, you saw the noblest gentleman of

Connaught, the bravest and the best, led to the slaughter by mercenary ruffians."

"I crave your pardon, lady; I saw him in the custody of the king's soldiers, with an honoured magistrate at their head, your father, Sir Guy Vernon."

"Worse wo! worse wo!" cried Miss Vernon. "Doolan, you are a man, and have human feelings: is it right that Mr. Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil should die for an opinion?"

"It is right that the breaker of the law should suffer by the law: but it is pity that Mr. Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil should die so young."

"Pity!" echoed the young lady. "Is it not too horrible that he should be cut off from this world so abruptly, and by such a fate?"

"It might be better," replied Doolan, "that he had time to repent of popery and treason."

This was but a brutal answer, yet poor Miss Vernon caught at it with hope. "You are right; it is fitting that he should live to gain more wisdom. Perhaps it is in your power to save his life."

"In mine, lady!"

"In your's, Doolan! Will you do it, if I can tell you how?"

"Not for the worth of all the lands of O'Neil!" was the answer. "I am your father's servant, and I am member of an Orange Lodge: I am not the man to betray my master for a papist's cause."

Miss Vernon looked at him steadily: there was nothing like indecision on his countenance. She proceeded on her way in silence, but more speedily than ever.

"That is not the shortest way home, Miss Vernon," said the groom, observing that his young mistress struck into a path that would take them somewhat to the left of the more direct line to Dromore.

"This is the way that I choose to take," answered the lady, "and your business, I believe, is to attend, not to direct me."

Thus rebuked, the man apologized for his interference, and pursued the course that he was ordered. They presently arrived at a cabin, the same that has been mentioned as the hut of the parents of the blind boy, Conolly. Miss Vernon entered the place, and, to her fearful delight, saw the boy seated alone at the hearth. She whispered to him for some minutes. The boy trembled, and, the moment she had ceased, he darted out by a back door. Miss Vernon retreated by that through which she had come in, and resumed her walk homeward, but very slowly now, followed by Doolan with his led horse. They had hardly gone a quarter of a mile, when, at a turning of the lane, three men with crape over their faces jumped over a wall: two of them seized Doolan by the arms, while the third snatched the bridle from his hand, mounted his horse, and rode away at speed. The groom struggled with the two men who held him till Miss Vernon said to him, "Be patient, Doolan; resistance is useless; these men will offer you no injury if you make no outcry: but you must submit." The men then hustled him into the nearest cabin, where he suffered no further wrong than the deprivation of liberty for a few hours, and some extra trouble in grooming his horse, which was restored to him at daylight, when he was released. Miss Vernon walked home the rest of the way alone.

The man who had rode off with the groom's horse understood well and executed promptly the instructions of the young lady of Dromore as delivered by Conolly. He scoured the country and raised the peasants to the rescue of Fitzmaurice. In less than half an hour nearly two hundred men, most of them armed with clubs only, and some few with pikes or pistols, were on their way to intercept the soldiers who had him in charge. Their knowledge of the country, and the certainty with which experience enabled them to traverse the swampy, or otherwise dangerous, parts of it, and so to curtail distances, made it easy for them to assemble at the appointed place long before the military escort arrived there. As they severally reached the spot they concealed themselves on the edge of an extensive bog, behind heaps of recently cut turf, that lay in ridges or small stacks near the road into which the party must strike when they came up from the beach. Presently a man on the watch gave them notice that "the army" were close at hand: in five minutes more this "army," a lieutenant and a dozen men, as has been said, appeared; and, the moment they had reached the spot on which it had been decided to attack them, the body in ambush rose with a loud yell, and rushed on and surrounded them. It was utterly impossible for so small a number of the steadiest and staunchest soldiers to oppose with any effect such a multitude of unexpected and determined assailants. The officer and men did all that it was in the power of brave fellows to do. Several of them were severely hurt, and every one of them was

disarmed and made prisoner. Fitzmaurice, on the first assault, instantly comprehending its meaning, had snatched the sword out of the officer's hand; but, having so disarmed, he protected him from injury, though he took care to have him secured. Sullivan rode about like a madman, and screamed and cursed in vain. Then, resolved that Fitzmaurice should not get free, and trusting that he himself might easily do so, being the only person mounted, he drew a pistol from his holster, and was in the act of presenting it at Fitzmaurice, when a sturdy blow of a shilelagh laid him prostrate on the earth. "Lie there, spawn of the devil!" cried the owner of the cudgel that had done this good service, and, in his fury, he kicked the fallen horseman. Another of the peasants secured the horse, and replaced the pistol in the holster, after examining it, and ascertaining that it was properly charged. Fitzmaurice then mounted the horse. He thanked his deliverers fervently, while they urged him to be gone. He required their promise that the officer and men should be well treated, that Sullivan should not receive any further violence, and that the whole party should be released in eight hours. They pledged themselves to obey his injunctions strictly, but vociferously interrupted him by imploring him to fly. It was indeed a crisis at which time could not be prudently lost. He waved his hat to his friends, bowed to the officer, and galloped back for the shore of Altbō, at the full speed of Sullivan's blood-horse, which was one of the most admired in the province.

As Fitzmaurice rode along the beach he perceived a brig lying-to in the offing of the bay; and, when he had passed about a quarter of a mile beyond the spot where he had been arrested, he observed a boat, in which were four sailors, with Conolly, the blind minstrel-boy. He hailed the men, and asked if they belonged to the brig Adventure, to which they answered in the affirmative, expressing impatience at the delay they had made for him, and muttering something about the tide. Conolly, the moment that he heard the voice of Fitzmaurice, leaped out of the boat, knelt upon the sand, and passionately thanked Heaven, sobbing with ecstasy. Fitzmaurice dismounted, patted the steed's neck and let him loose, threw his arms round the boy and raised him up, and learned from him with astonishment that he was indebted for the rescue to the energy of Mary. There was no leisure for the full indulgence of his feelings at such a communication. He once more hugged the poor boy to his breast, and then stepped into the boat.

The sun was dropping behind Knockacree when the boat of the Adventure was pushed off from the beach, and, before the blushing cloud that rested on the mountain-top became pale, Fitzmaurice, the Exile, "miserable, desolate, undone," reached the vessel that was to bear him to a far-off land.

In the mean time, the officer and soldiers, who had been so unceremoniously forced to resign their prisoner and their own freedom, were conducted across the bog by ways which would have subjected them to the peril, almost to the certainty, of being drowned, had any other than the peasants of the neighbourhood been their guides. After traversing that black and spongy waste for two or three miles, they were introduced into a ruined cabin, of which the roof had been destroyed by fire, through the wantonness of an excise-officer, who, having some time before, protected by a party of military, sought for here and discovered an illicit still, had proceeded, as was his duty, after securing the worm, to destroy the other utensils for distillation, but so carelessly that the flames which he had lit to burn the tubs had caught the rafters, and the inhabitants of the poor hovel had been driven for shelter elsewhither. In the floor of this cabin was a trap-door, which was now opened by one of the peasants, and here the soldiers were compelled to descend by a ladder into a spacious vault, to which a little light and air could be admitted by an aperture through the earth, the opening being at a great distance from the cabin, and easily concealed at pleasure. Here the military were obliged to remain all night, during which, though they were otherwise civilly treated, they had not the consolation of tranquil rest, for the men on guard over them beguiled the hours in singing rebel songs, one of which I am tempted to give to the reader, not so much for the words, which are but a poor specimen of rebel poetry, but for the sake of the pleasing air to which they were set. Shan Van, or perhaps Sean Bean, is, I believe, an old woman, under which character Ireland is here typified. The words are given exactly as they used to be sung in earnest formerly, and as they are occasionally still sung for amusement in very loyal companies.*

* There are many more verses of later, and some of very recent date.

THE FRENCH ARE ON THE SEA.

The French are on the sea, Said the Sha - na - va - na - vogh, The French are on the sea, Said the Sha - na - va - na - vogh, The French are on the sea, They'll be here with - out de - lay, And I hope they'll gain the day, Said the Sha - na - va - na - vogh.

A REBEL SONG.

The French are on the sea,' } bis.
Said the Shan Van Võ; }
The French are on the sea,
They'll be here without delay,
And the Orange shall decay,
Said the Shan Van Võ.

What colour shall they wear? } bis.
Said the Shan Van Võ; }
What colour should be seen,
Where our fathers' homes have been,
But our own immortal green?
Said the Shan Van Võ.

What will the yeomen do? } bis.
Said the Shan Van Võ; }
What would the yeomen do,
But give up the red and blue,
And swear that they'll be true
To the Shan Van Võ?

Where will they make their camp? } bis.
Said the Shan Van Võ; }
On the Curragh of Kildare;
Lord Gerald will be there,
And their pikes in good repair,
Said the Shan Van Võ.

Will Ireland then be free? } bis.
Said the Shan Van Võ; }
Yes, Ireland shall be free;
We'll plant a laurel-tree
And name it Liberty,
Said the Shan Van Võ.

At daybreak the soldiers were escorted to a by-road that led to Sligo, and were then left to pursue their way. Their arms had not been restored, and the poorer classes did not repress jeers and exultations as the party passed through the suburbs and streets of Sligo to their barracks. Scouts had been abroad all night, without gaining tidings of the absentees, and great had been the wonder of the small force left in the barrack at the delay of their detachment, and greater the rage of Sir Guy Vernon and his co-magistrates at the non-appearance of the prisoner.

Sullivan, having been so roughly dealt with as has been described, was unable to walk, and was therefore carried by two men to the nearest empty shed, and there abandoned, to weather it out as he could. He passed the night undisturbed, except by the pain of his bruises and his fears of worse treatment. At daylight he ventured to crawl away to Tanderagõ, whence he was forwarded to Sligo by the humanity of a gentleman who resided at the mansion of that name. His horse had been running wild, but was recovered in the course of the day, and ever after, in allusion to the use made of him by Fitzmaurice, went by the name of Escape, under which he won several races at the Curragh, and elsewhere.

At Dromore the mystery was not fully explained even after the return of Doolan with his restored horse, early in the morning, till that of Sir Guy, some hours later. But Mary had been relieved earlier from the anguish of suspense as to the issue of her desperate scheme for the liberation of her lover. Not even to her mother had she ventured to relate what had occurred; and she had been on the watch for some hours at an open window, when, about ten at night, she heard the sound of Conolly's pipe below. He played a cheerful air, then sang a wild sort of spontaneous ballad in Irish, which may be thus rudely interpreted.

> His chain is snapt, his wing is free,
> The Merlin-hawk of Knockacree!
> Alas for us, alas for thee,
> We've lost the Hawk of Knockacree!
>
> The Merlin-hawk of Knockacree,
> So fierce to some, so fond to thee!
> He bends his flight beyond the sea;
> God speed the Hawk of Knockacree!

An emphatic "God bless you, Conolly!" before she closed the window, informed the faithful boy that he had been heard. She sank on her knees, and poured out her soul in humble gratitude to God for the mercy vouchsafed to her lover, after which she hastened to nestle herself in her mother's arms, and to confess all.

CHAPTER VIII.

> Yet wandering I found on my ruinous walk,
> By the dial-stone aged and green,
> A rose of the wilderness left on its stalk
> To mark where a garden had been.
>
> *Campbell.*

> The shades of evening round them close
> Between the land and tide:—
> Who but a lover ever chose
> A blind boy for a guide?

THE brig in which a passage had been engaged for Fitzmaurice, was an American merchantman, that had discharged a cargo of flax-seed and timber at Sligo, and was now bound to Madeira for wine. In about three weeks it reached its destination; and Fitzmaurice, on his arrival at Funchal, might have had several companions, young men of his own nation, fugitives like himself, from the same disastrous cause. But his spirits were broken, and he could not endure the society of his countrymen. His long residence at Douay had given him a partiality for the gloom of religious buildings, which now became more grateful to his spirit than ever, and his only pleasure was in solitary perambulations along the aisles of churches, or among the solemn shades of convent grounds. In the course of his excursions, in the romantic neighbourhood of the town, he was particularly struck with the picturesque aspect of a monastery in a most secluded situation; and the superior, after some inquiries and examination of his references, made no difficulty of admitting him as a boarder into the convent.

He had been here about three months, when a letter from his father, couched in kindlier terms than any that he had ever received from him, and transmitting a credit with a Funchal house for any sums he might require, informed him that his brother, the wretched Aubrey Buller, had been shot in a duel in Dublin, in consequence of some gambling quarrel, by the very Dillon with whom he had been in league to betray Fitzmaurice. Dillon had absconded. He added, that the hand of death was on himself, and that he felt an acute pang at the thought of the utter improbability of his living long enough to see his only remaining son, that he might forgive and be forgiven, for that they had mutually sinned towards each other.

A letter of a later date, but which arrived by the same packet, from a friend at Sligo,

whose authority could not be doubted, brought him intelligence of his father's decease ; and also informed him that Miss Vernon was on the eve of marriage with Mr. Sullivan. The latter fact, it said, strange as it sounded, was certain, for both Mr. Sullivan and Sir Guy Vernon, who was in Dublin with his family, had formally announced it to their friends.

This letter also urged him to lose no time in using his interest with his powerful English relatives to prevent the forfeiture by attainder of his natural inheritance, and to obtain, if possible, a free pardon from the king, with permission to return home. But the earthly hopes of Fitzmaurice were now over ; and though he did not altogether neglect this latter advice, he turned his thoughts to a higher source of grace, with the compunction of one who had forsaken the house of peace and longed for re-admission. His education having qualified him for the priesthood, he resolved on fulfilling the destiny that had been designed for him by his father, and by the purer feelings of his own youthful piety. Accordingly, after as short a preparation as the forms of the Church would allow, he became a consecrated priest.

Some months after he had taken the irrevocable vow, further intelligence from Ireland induced him to apply for leave to quit the island of Madeira. The Diocesan, whose esteem and confidence he had won, would gladly have detained him ; but his request was urgent, and his reasons were forcible, and the permission was granted with reluctance and good grace.

It was about twenty months after the separation of Mary and Fitzmaurice, when a stranger one morning advanced up the dismembered avenue of Dromore. He looked around him with a dejected air, as if he missed, like lost old friends, the noble trees that used to shade it, for all had disappeared.

At a distance, the house still looked as inviting as formerly; but when he approached, its air of desolation struck him the more forcibly. The carriage-road was grass-grown; grass and groundsel had pushed their way unmolested between the interstices of the stone steps that led up to the hall door, and had even crept among the tesselated marble that paved the hall itself. Not an article of furniture was visible in the mansion, except the heraldic carvings that adorned the stately entrance. The hills and the ocean looked as grandly as ever, but, immediately below and around the house, the park almost without a tree, the pastures without stock, except two or three wretched animals driven thither on trespass ; the cabins black, dirty, and ruinous —all gave dreary proofs of the departure of the family of Dromore. He descended into the garden, formerly the best in the country, and found it a labyrinth of weeds. A little sunny slope had been a flower-parterre, and it was once the delight of Mary to cultivate and embellish it. This was now overrun with thistles, nettles, and dock, and its former use was only marked out by a few rose-trees and other vigorous plants that still struggled through the obstructions, but whose sickly leaves and buds showed how ill they fared among the coarse usurpers of the soil. The stranger plucked one of those sickly blossoms, and thrust it into his bosom : some nettle-leaves were incautiously pulled with it, and he heeded not their sting.

In another part of the garden was an artificial mound of considerable height, on which was a rustic summer house, approached through a pretty maze of holly-trees and laurels. This had been a favourite retreat of Mary in her childhood, where she studied her lessons, and where she often said them to her mother. To this spot the stranger was suddenly attracted by the sound of a pipe, which he well remembered to have heard before. He ascended with a wary tread, till he attained such a situation as enabled him to see, without disturbing the rustic musician, poor blind Conolly, while he played *Savourneen Declish*, that exquisitely pathetic air, which formerly thrilled to the Irish heart, and is still listened to with fond emotion. The moment he ceased to play, the boy became conscious of the presence of an intruder, who was not aware of having made even a leaf rustle since he had taken his stand. Quickly turning his pale faded face, the musician eagerly inquired, who was there?

"You choose a mournful tune, Conolly," was the answer : and the well-remembered voice in an instant brought the delighted and trembling boy to the feet of Gerald Fitzmaurice. He clung to his knees, and addressed him with a thousand wild touching exclamations of wonder and welcome. Fitzmaurice eagerly asked many questions relative to the Vernons. The reply that he received to the first made him immediately set forward for the sea-shore with Conolly for his guide, who, during their walk, related the following circumstances, with some of which Fitzmaurice was already acquainted.

CHAPTER IX.

Pluck up thy heart! for why despond?
Thou hast a daughter fine;
She'll raze thy name from off the bond
By changing her's to mine.

Adversity had been busy in the family of Sir Guy Vernon since the flight of Fitzmaurice. He became inextricably entangled in gambling transactions by the spider-skill of the wily Sullivan. He had been ever very unlucky at play, and never much disposed to calculate the consequences.

Mr. Sullivan was the most fortunate, but at the same time the most accommodating and liberal, of his friends. He would take a bond, advance money or procure its advancement for Sir Guy, buy up the debt due to a troublesome or needy creditor; for a small sum due take a horse, a curricle, a car, any tangible thing; and for a large one he would be satisfied with a mortgage of a fair proportion of the baronet's land. Thus, sum after sum was borrowed on ruinous interest, and staked and lost, and acres after acres were mortgaged, till the estate was pledged beyond half its value; and, the heir-male failing, there was no entail.

Partly aware of her husband's situation, and also alarmed by Mary's sunken spirits and declining health, Lady Vernon urged him to take them to Dublin, and he at length consented. But their first day's journey was only a few miles beyond Collooney, to the house of Mr. Sullivan. He wished to entertain his friends on their departure, and had, he said, invited a large party to meet them. Apologies, however, came to him from the members, male and female, of two or three families who certainly had been asked, but not till after it was ascertained by Mr. Sullivan that they had other engagements for that day. Their absence was not regretted by Lady Vernon and Mary, who wished to avoid company, and who now heard with more pain than pleasure that four gentlemen and three ladies were still to join them at dinner. But, when the time came, not one of these had appeared, and they waited a full hour in vain expectation of their arrival. They were then ushered into the dining-room, where there was cheerful preparation for a party—a blazing hearth, and a table covered for twelve persons, of whom only five, the three Vernons with their host and his sister, were present. Rain fell in torrents (as it too often does on that bibulous isle, which is, alas! the secret of its epithet of *emerald.*) Mr. Sullivan attributed to the bad weather the failure of the rest of his bidden friends. Sir Guy, though in some respects a shrewd and clever man, was an easy dupe to a liar, because he was himself veracious. He had not the least suspicion of the fact, which was, that no other guest had been really expected; though Sullivan had played off the trick of making it appear so, that he might have his prey alone that night without the semblance of design.

The three ladies retired soon after dinner, and while the rain and wind were shaking the ill-fitted window-frames, the two gentlemen drew closer to the crackling hearth to imbibe strong port. The baronet, whose customary and much less potent after-dinner beverage was claret, was speedily warmed into high spirits. Sullivan had apologized for the deficiency of his cellar; his last batch of claret, he pretended, was unfortunately exhausted. Sir Guy did not much relish the new, black, and fiery juice at first, but by degrees his taste improved, and he pronounced it excellent, suiting the action to the word with right good will.

A dice-box was on a side-table — it had been left there by accident, of course. It caught Sir Guy's eye: he gazed at it till it seemed two dice-boxes. He immediately proposed play. Mr. Sullivan objected, and, though Sir Guy pressed him hard for his revenge, he held out till it was reasonable to believe that his friend's wife and daughter had retired to their chamber, for Lady Vernon and Mary had lately always occupied but one bed-room, on account of the mother's anxiety about her child's health.

Sullivan was then with seeming reluctance prevailed on to play, and they threw with various success for some time; the baronet, whether he gained or lost, applying to his glass at every throw. He consequently became so intoxicated as to be hardly able to hold the box with sufficient steadiness to prosecute the game. Miss Sullivan, the honest sister of a scoundrel, unexpectedly entered the room and entreated Sir Guy to go to rest. A ruffian scowl from her brother scared her out of the apartment. The play was continued till the ruin of Sir Guy was completed. Before he was conducted up to bed, he signed, with a hand guided by Sullivan himself, an acknowledgment of the new debt which he had thus incurred.

It was not till he arose at mid-day, sobered by some hours' sleep, that he became conscious of the full extent of his misfortune. He did not, even then, remember the occurrences of

the night; but Mr. Sullivan produced the document, which soon convinced him that he was at his mercy. Sir Guy no longer bore his ill fortune with composure. His eyes seemed opened all at once to the full horrors of ruin. It never occurred to him for a moment to dispute any part of this or any other "debt of honour" after he had pledged his signature for its liquidation. But he stamped up and down the room like a madman, venting imprecations on the false friends who had allured him to destruction, and most of all on Sullivan, who heard his outrages with calmness, and watched every turn of his countenance with close and patient attention. At last he found his opportunity to speak, and made a proposal to Sir Guy which astonished and silenced him. After half an hour's conference, Sir Guy desired a servant to tell Miss Vernon that her father wished to see her in ten minutes. In vain did Mr. Sullivan now deprecate so much precipitation; he was positive in his resolution to settle the matter at once, and Sullivan withdrew and rode out of the way. Sir Guy went up to his own bed-room, and returned with a pair of pistols which he had deliberately loaded. He placed them on a table. Mary appeared, and started back with terror when she saw her father's flashing eyes and ominous brow. He locked the door and drew her forward towards the table, and, pointing to the pistols, told her that unless she would save her family from ruin by solemnly contracting to marry Mr. Sullivan, she must see her father destroy himself in her presence. She conjured him, but without effect, to give her time for a reply, to let her at least remove those fatal weapons before she gave an answer. He would hear nothing but her distinct and instant consent to the terms on which Sullivan offered to relinquish the greater part of his pecuniary claims. She was also enjoined not to make any communication to her mother on the subject at present, nor at any time to betray to her the motive of her acceptance of Sullivan. All that she could at last gain was an agreement that the marriage should not take place for three months. For the rest of that day she avoided, as much as she could, the odious attentions of Sullivan, and the next morning she set out with her father and mother for Dublin, leaving him to boast of his bride-elect in confidential whispers all over the county. But his prize was not so secure as he believed. About a month after their arrival in Dublin, Sir Guy Vernon was seized with typhus fever. His mind was already "brought very low," and as sick with trouble as that of Jephtha, the Gileadite, after he had vowed his daughter; for Mary too was her father's "only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter." Probably the malignity of the bodily disease was quickened by his mental sufferings, which perhaps were far from being allayed by the persevering attendance of Mary, as well as of Lady Vernon, at his bedside. The filial piety that shrunk not from the danger of mortal contagion perhaps smote on the heart of the parent who had so cruelly devoted *her* as a sacrifice in his necessity, and "could not go back." He died in the prime of manhood, after a few weeks' illness.

The situation of Sir Guy's widow and child was now dismal indeed, and Sullivan lost no time in offering them his services, nothing doubting a favourable reception. The motive that had forced Mary to sanction his pretensions to her hand had expired with her father, and she repulsed the fellow with a disgust too decisive to leave him further hope. He at once revenged and consoled himself by making the best use he could of such legal powers as he had obtained over the family estate. He took possession of Dromore, and sold off all the furniture: and he cut down and removed the timber as fast as possible; this he called "disparking the demesne." Even the old oaks of the avenue were not respected:

——— he sent forth word
To level with the earth a noble horde,
A brotherhood of venerable trees,
Leaving an ancient dome
Beggared and outraged! Many hearts deplored
The fate of those old trees, and oft with pain
The traveller at this day will stop and gaze
On wrongs which nature scarcely seems to heed.
For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks and bays,
And the pure mountains, and the glorious sea,
And the green silent pastures yet remain.

Lady Vernon and Mary returned to the neighbourhood of their desolate home, and secluded themselves in the cottage of an old housekeeper of Mary's grandfather, the widow Trench, a respectable and faithful woman, whose decline of life was rendered comfortable by a legacy from her master, whose finances had been more discreetly regulated than those of his heir. They had been but a few days here when the pernicious effects of sedulous attendance on Sir Guy discovered themselves in Mary. She had inhaled the infection, and was now in a condition from which there was as much to fear as to hope.

———

CHAPTER X.

Oh! rose of May!
O heavens, is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Shakspere.

It was dark when Fitzmaurice and his blind but sure guide reached the cottage, which was situated under a long rocky ridge, close upon the sea-shore. There were a few more cottages along the bank, but at considerable intervals from each other. The loneliness, therefore, of the place was not at this hour much relieved by the few and straggling lights that glimmered from them. Fitzmaurice was now about to be delivered from the suspense in which he had been during his hurried walk from Dromore. He paused at the door, breathless, dreading the event, and almost wishing he was not so near. He had scarcely been there a minute when he heard a hoarse and sternly complaining voice within. There was something familiar to him in the accent, and it made him shudder. Could that rough masculine voice be Mary's?

Her voice, that even in its mirthful mood
Has made him wish to steal away and weep!

——— *her* voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman.

A suspicion of the truth flashed upon his mind; he listened with intense eagerness, and was soon confirmed in his dreadful suspicion. She spoke more loudly, and the language of violent delirium could no longer be mistaken. She had evidently already talked and screamed herself hoarse; but she continued to pour forth, with almost unceasing volubility, a torrent of malicious invective so unnatural from Mary as to curdle his blood with horror. Lady Vernon and he were the particular objects of her reproach — the two beings in the world to whom she had been most devotedly attached. His name, especially, repeatedly burst from her lips, accompanied by the wildest and bitterest expressions of accusation and hatred. At length she stopped, from utter weariness. Fitzmaurice, after waiting some time to assure himself that she was quiet, ventured to knock as gently as possible.

"Who is there?" immediately exclaimed Mary, whom not a sound escaped.

He would have retreated, but the door was immediately opened by Mrs. Trench, who held a light up to his face, and, unable to command her astonishment at seeing him, unguardedly cried out, "It is Mr. Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil!" Mary caught the exclamation, and the effect of the presence of her lover was most painfully extraordinary. She did not shriek nor make any violent signal of sorrow or of joy. She only hastily drew aside the bed-curtains, and, with a sort of quiet sarcastic gaiety and mock-politeness, invited him to draw near. The orbs of her eyes seemed expanded to an unusual size, and were "as bright as freezing stars." Her flushed cheeks were of the brightest vermilion imaginable. Some loose locks of her long hair floated over her neck and bosom. She did not show any surprise at his arrival, but took it quite as an ordinary occurrence. Her mother was seated by the further side of the bed, too full of grief to be readily susceptible of any other feeling on this occasion, except perhaps of hope, which did seem to be partially awakened as she watched the effect of this unexpected visit on her daughter's mind. Fitzmaurice drew near, and, forgetful or careless of the hazard of infection, took her little burning hand, which she yielded without ceremony. Lovely as she always was, she now looked unnaturally beautiful. She stared at him with a gay and saucy smile, from which he must have turned in dismay, had he not dwelt on it with anguish and pity. She talked to him, incessantly, in the most flippant and unmeaning manner; sometimes lowering her voice to a whisper, as if to make some private communication, and then breaking into long-continued hysterical laughter, till she became so exhausted that she sank back on her pillow and afforded Fitzmaurice an opportunity of withdrawing.

After a short and afflicting interview with Lady Vernon, he was accommodated with a small apartment in the cottage. There he threw himself on his knees, and, with humble fervour, breathed forth aspirations for the recovery of Mary: he was too sincere a Christian to despair, even in this hour of severe and almost intolerable misery.

For a considerable while there was not a sound to disturb his devotion, except the precise sharp clicking of a clock, and the sullen dashing of the waves as the tide measured every step that it gained upon the beach,

And, shining with a gloominess, the water
Swang as the moon had taught her.

But, suddenly, a scream from Mary, followed by the distinct enunciation of his name, brought him to her bedside.

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CHAPTER XI.

Go, hang aloft the traitor-knave:
And let me don my shoon,
And merrily dance above his grave
A hornpipe in the moon.

She was seated upright on the bed. By the glimmering of the lamp, the livid paleness of death seemed spread over her countenance; but, when her mother and her nurse endeavoured to persuade her to lie down, she pushed them from her with fierceness, and, grappling a hand of Fitzmaurice, as if her sinews were of iron, she gradually leaned towards him till her stern malicious eyes were close to his face. She then assailed him with a volley of reproaches, her features every moment growing fiercer till her dilated eyeballs, curled lips, and clenched teeth, gave her the appearance of a grinning demon.

"Yes! I know I am mad," she cried; "you made me so! You, Gerald the Rebel! You and my mother stole my father's gold. You murdered my father. You plundered our house, and tried to kill me, but I foiled you. You heaped fire upon me, and drove me mad. But I will have Mr. Sullivan. He shall be my husband. We will be married on the day that sees a rope round the neck of Gerald the Rebel."

In this strain she continued, till, with the abrupt change so common in these melancholy cases, her hand all at once relaxed its hold, and her eyes lost their hideous expression, and the tenderness of woman rushed into them and quenched their fury with a flood of tears. She kissed, repeatedly, the hand she had so strenuously held; and, with the most moving looks, interrupted by convulsive weeping, she earnestly asked him why he had deserted her. She almost seemed to have recovered her faculties. But for the altered voice, she was almost the Mary who had parted from her lover some months before under the rocks of Coradunn. Fitzmaurice with difficulty supported the scene; but it was of brief duration. Her irritability revived, and she passed the night in alternate ravings of anger, mockery, and mirth.

Day broke upon this cottage of wretchedness. The keenness of the morning air seemed to allay the fever of her brain, and she at last sank in a slumber less restless than had yet come over her. Soon afterwards the tread of horses' hoofs and the voice of Conolly were heard from without. He had been despatched by Fitzmaurice to a cabin at some distance, where he found a confidential person, whom he was instructed to send to Sligo for a medical gentleman, one who had acquired just celebrity in the country, but who had not been in attendance on the Vernons. Conolly now announced his arrival. Fitzmaurice, without hesitation, went out and presented himself before him. The physician looked at him with gravity and surprise.

"Mr. O'Neil! can this be possible!"

"Well, sir," replied Fitzmaurice, "you recognise me. I am still an outlaw in this country, yet I thus expose myself to a man whose political sentiments I know to be hostile to my safety. But, sir, my errand here has nothing to do with treason; and I have always heard Doctor Kirwan mentioned as a man of honour."

"Mr. O'Neil," said the doctor, "shall have no reason to contradict that favourable report."

This short dialogue was held in a tone perfectly satisfactory to both parties. Each appeared to understand and to rely upon the other, and Fitzmaurice at once proceeded to detail the particulars of Miss Vernon's situation. Doctor Kirwan listened with profound attention, and then went in to see her, and to confer with Lady Vernon; after which he expressed much regret at the interviews that had taken place between Fitzmaurice and the invalid, considering them likely to aggravate the mental disorder. He strongly urged the necessity of removing from her sight every object with which she was most familiar, as well as the persons in whom her affections were most interested, particularly Lady Vernon and Fitzmaurice. He did not attach much importance to the fever, which he thought she had taken in but a slight degree; and he attributed the confusion of her intellect much less to this cause than to the operation of many circumstances of severe and afflicting trial on a mind acutely sensitive.

At the distance of about a mile from their present residence, and in a very sequestered situation, close to the sands, there was a comfortably furnished cottage to be let, called The Mermaid's Lodge. Thither Doctor Kirwan proposed to remove Miss Vernon, and to place her under the exclusive care of a woman of his own selection, on whose experience and proper temper he could depend. Afflictive as such an arrangement must be to Lady Vernon, she, as well as Fitzmaurice, had the good sense to submit at once to the separation, and to promise not to visit her daughter till the physician's consent should

be given. The widow Trench did not so peaceably acquiesce in the resignation of the office of nurse to a stranger; but, in spite of her expostulations, the removal was effected the next morning, and she was forbidden to follow.

For some subsequent months Lady Vernon was obliged to content herself with the account given, two or three times a-week, by Doctor Kirwan, who never failed to call on her, in his ride home, after his visits to Mary. Fitzmaurice was, for a short time, compelled to hide himself for safety during the day, but he often approached close to Mary's residence, at dusk, to listen for her voice.

Fitzmaurice had written from Madeira, and also from the place of his debarkation in Ireland, to his English relations on the subject of his proscription. He had laid open to them his altered views in life, and his wish to reside in his native country; and there, by the proper exercise of his priestly functions, to make reparation for the grievous errors into which he had fallen. He had not long to wait for a fair answer. The interest of his friends had been recently strengthened by some changes in the Ministry, and they not only obtained for him the king's full pardon but a release of his estate, which, on his father's death, had been attached by the crown.

CHAPTER XII.

Oh come, oh teach me nature to subdue,
Renounce my love, my life, myself—and you!
Pope.

JUDICIOUS treatment, tranquillity of place, and estrangement from all to whom she was dear or familiar, gave a salutary check to the excitement of Mary's mind; but her complete recovery was the work of many slow-paced, anxious weeks. She gradually became calmer, till she sank into a tame and stupid apathy, which her medical visiter observed with satisfaction. She was then permitted to walk on the beach with her attendant, and, as she regained strength, her sensibility returned; she grew conscious of her deliverance from the most dreadful of human calamities, and more and more fondly anxious to go back to her mother, and to see Fitzmaurice, who now, screening themselves from observation, often watched her when she walked out. Finally, the happy morning arrived when she could be restored to her mother. Dr. Kirwan's attendant was displaced by the widow Trench, whose extravagant joy was at once touching and ludicrous. Lady Vernon clasped her daughter to her bosom with such delight as every mother's feelings can comprehend, but not even a mother's words could tell.

Fitzmaurice was permitted to see her on the following morning. Lady Vernon thought proper to be present at the interview; for she had been made acquainted, to her bitter disappointment, with the irrevocable, and, as she could not help thinking, rashly incurred, obligation which precluded all hope of his ever being more than as a brother to her child. Fitzmaurice stifled his emotion, but Mary could *not* repress either her blushes or her tears.

The friend of her heart was henceforward a regular visiter at the secluded cottage; and when any chance delayed his arrival beyond the customary hour, Mary's continual and anxious looks at the casement made it appear but too evident to Lady Vernon that the hardest trial yet awaited her daughter, in that disclosure which must once more annihilate her hopes. To Lady Vernon the difficulty of breaking the secret seemed every day to increase. But Fitzmaurice thought otherwise: he was by degrees preparing the ductile mind of Mary for the communication, and, without any attempt to make her a proselyte to his faith, was weaning her affections from objects of temporal consideration, and directing them more exclusively to Heaven. In this delicate and arduous task he derived most powerful assistance from the spiritual works of the Archbishop of Cambray, whose pleadings to the heart against the heart itself, to the affections against every deceitful or unhallowed bias, against every feeling of creature-worship, at the same time that they breathe the purest principles of love of our neighbour, as a part and an evidence of our love of his Maker, are precious examples of the mild Christian eloquence, whose suavity is strength.

It will be asked, what became of Fitzmaurice's own feelings? Could he so easily overcome them? Could he remember the early days of their attachment, the simplicity of her early love, her devotedness to him in sorrow and danger; and could he then, without intolerable agony, see her again before him, restored as it were from another world, lovely and affectionate as ever, with no obstacle to their union but that one bar, sacred and insurmountable, that he himself had too hastily established between them from an unjust impression of her inconstancy? Un-

doubtedly the task was mighty, the struggle terrible, but the necessity for its accomplishment was obvious and imperative; and to what is religious fortitude unequal? Fenelon, more than any other instructor not absolutely inspired, had taught him submission, and had taught him also how to teach it.

For the present, Fitzmaurice assiduously employed himself in forwarding his views with Mary when with her; and, when absent from her, in regulating his worldly interests so as to make them most subservient to his future ministry; and in attending also to those of Lady Vernon. By the aid of several gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and backed by able lawyers, he was at last enabled to drive Sullivan to such a compromise as deprived him of all further control over the Dromore property, which, however, was very considerably diminished.

In due time the discovery so dreaded by Lady Vernon was to be made. Fitzmaurice had gained permission from her to make it himself on the following day. On the eve of that day, a bland and beautiful summer evening, the two ladies and he were seated under the porch of the Mermaid's Lodge, looking at the sun that was just sinking beyond the western ocean.

Nor moon nor stars were out:
They did not dare to tread so soon about,
Though trembling in the footsteps of the sun.
The light was neither night nor day's, but one
Which life-like had a beauty in its doubt;
And Silence's impassioned breathings round
Seemed wandering into sound.

Mary was sitting between her mother and Fitzmaurice. After a very long pause, the first words that were spoken proceeded from *her*, and exceedingly surprised her two auditors. In a low, very low tone, scarcely above a whisper, but perfectly distinct and audible, she said to Fitzmaurice, "Dear and *reverend* friend, you take a long time to prepare me for your secret."

Fitzmaurice was strongly agitated by this address, and hardly knew whether he heard aright.

"My dearest Mary," said Lady Vernon, "what do you mean?"

"My dearest mother," answered Mary, whom perhaps the twilight obscurity had imboldened for a moment, but whose accents now came faltering, and as if with difficulty, "you understand my meaning well;" the remainder of the sentence she uttered still more faintly but rapidly—"and so does he who chose the better part, and gave up poor Mary to devote himself to the service of the altar."

"Tell me, Mary," cried Fitzmaurice, much moved, "do you suppose that I have been faithless to you?"

Before she could reply, Lady Vernon interposed a remonstrance: "Hush, hush, Fitzmaurice; remember that we must not excite her."

"Do not fear for me, my mother," resumed Mary; "I am collected and sustained. No, Gerald, no; neither of us has been faithless, we were both unfortunate. I was affianced to another under compulsion, and you vowed yourself to the Church on the impulse of a rumour — no, pardon me, Gerald, not that — no doubt, no doubt it was a holy impulse; you have done well for yourself, and well for me. I am happy now; and it is your sweet counsel that has made me so."

"But how is this?" asked Lady Vernon.

"My dear mother," continued Mary, "Gerald thought that he was fortifying me against a fearful attack that was still to be made upon my peace of mind, while he was only pouring balm upon the hurt spirit that had already suffered the attack. Dr. Kirwan would by no means trust me out of his hands, nor allow either of you to approach me, before he had himself carefully imparted the whole truth to me. He was afraid that neither of you could inflict the necessary pain so skilfully as himself. It was hard to bear; yet it was soothing to know that I was not deserted for another."

"Deserted, Mary!" said Fitzmaurice, mournfully.

"Then you never *will* desert me, Gerald, will you?" said Mary, touched and gratified; "you will always be to me as you are now, next to my mother, my best and dearest counsellor and friend?"

"Ever, ever, Mary, your brother on earth, and, by the blessing of God, in heaven!"

"I am content, more than content," she said; "I am very happy."

"But why, Mary," inquired Lady Vernon, "did you not sooner communicate to us your knowledge of Mr. O'Neil's situation? Why did not Dr. Kirwan tell us?"

"He perhaps had more reasons than one for his positive injunction to me of reserve on the subject. Perhaps he thought that it was safest for me that there should be some check upon us all, that I might be as little exposed as possible to agitating conversations: so he left you your secret to keep, and the knowledge of it was to be my secret. The only reason he gave me, however, was one that concerned the discipline of my own mind: he

said that it would be good and wholesome for it that I should train it awhile to the curb of a restraint of this sort. He did not remove the restriction till this morning. He praised me for my obedience, and said, smiling, as he left me, 'You may now do as you like; I will trust you in every thing to your own discretion.'"

Mary turned to Fitzmaurice, and tenderly added—"Gerald, neither you nor I could be complimented on our discretion, when we stood on the sea-fowls' ledge on the day of our parting—but we are wiser now."

This was indeed perilous ground for the memory to go back to. Fitzmaurice could not help answering—"Yet to what but to the true love that is heart-wisdom, the best and surest of all, Mary—to what but your own heart-wisdom, under divine favour, on that very day, and after that miserable parting, do I owe the preservation of my life?"

Lady Vernon here observed, that the chill of the evening might be prejudicial to Mary.

Fitzmaurice felt that he had scarcely been sufficiently guarded in the words he had just hazarded to Miss Vernon. He made a resolution to be more wary, and he kept it.

The event proved not only that Fitzmaurice had been strong enough to restrain his own heart, but that he had had the influence to contribute to the acquirement of that most difficult of victories by the young and enthusiastic Beauty of Dromore.

I will not say that, continuing as they did to reside near to each other, with all the memorials of their most true passion and its delusive prospects around them, feelings of the most acute regret did not often press upon their minds. Nor is it to be denied that Mary frequently repeated her visits to the rocks of Coradunn, and to the cavern on the shore, and to the well among the mountains, nor that her eyes on her return often betrayed that she had not seen these places without emotion.

I will not pretend that even after she had attained, as she hoped, complete resignation, the struggle was not often, and again and again, renewed in her womanly heart between forbidden love and forbidding duty. At first she would frequently murmur to herself:

"Hard fate! He reappeared among us as unexpectedly as if an inhabitant of the tomb had arisen; and his apparition has been almost as visionary; for the vowed priest seems to me but as the spectre of my deceased lover."

At a later period her musings, not always inaudible to her mother, would run thus:

"I have been so long inured to affliction that I should feel strange without it. Grief seems my natural aliment. Sorrow is my joy, my own sorrow; I pet it with a selfish tenderness, as the poor mother doats on an ugly and perverse brat:—no; that is not a just illustration; there is sweetness and loveliness in my sorrow; my misery is not misery; and I almost love my own sad lot. But I am weak, weak; the indulgence of these thoughts is folly. I must go to the old burial-ground (but not to the little well,) and, as, I stand by the graves of those I loved, I will learn a lesson of wisdom. Their trials were perhaps greater than mine, and some of them died broken-hearted; but how quietly they sleep now! and I shall soon sleep by them, a long perfect sleep, till the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall awake at the call of the Archangel, and shall be caught up in the clouds to meet their Lord in air."

In such moods she would hie to the churchyard, and listen to the whispers of the dead, more impressive than a thousand homilies; and on such occasions she would pass near the favourite little well, for it was on her way both as she went to and from the cemetery of Dromard; but she could not always resist the attraction of that beloved spot, even when she had resolved not to turn her steps to it. One evening, as she returned from the tombs, she found herself almost unconsciously at the Well. The setting sun was touching the grand brow of Knockacree, glorifying too the summits of the adjacent hills and distant mountains, leaving in shadow that one spot only which once no shadow could ever darken to her fancy. It now looked dull and forlorn; far more so than the graves she had just left: her heart was penetrated by deep and fond emotions as she stood beneath the old sycamore, and leaned on the altar at its foot. Hither it was that Fitzmaurice had so often conducted her in the happy spring-time of their acquaintance; here they had so often rested together. Again in idea she turned to that dear voice; again she looked into those eyes, and thought she read the language of "lang syne."

At this moment Fitzmaurice himself appeared, and, interrupting her reverie, gently chid her, as if he had indeed read *her* meditations.

"Mary, this place is devoted to religious usages—many of your faith will say to idolatrous superstitions—you do not judge of

even the zealots of my faith so harshly—but what if I say that you and I have perhaps been the only idolaters here, for here we have worshipped each other, worshipped images of clay, unrebuked by the sanctity of the place; while the poor creatures who come hither annually, and who kiss that little rude crucifix, not in reverence, as they are accused, of the worthless wood, unless they be fearfully misinstructed, but of the great mystery of redemption, which it symbolizes, leave all human respects behind them when they approach that altar, and worship only their Lord and Mediator, imploring the saints also to assist them by their supplications to Him through whom alone they can be saved. Mary, you and I have desecrated this place by making it one of our chosen resorts for meditation on each other: we have set up idols here; let us never do so again. This place is more dangerous for you than the cliff of Altbō. Let us leave it, my dearest friend, and let us learn to live more apart from one another, and all will soon be well."

But Fitzmaurice was very far from being exempt from the weaknesses to which he was at once indulgent and rigorous in Mary. Even his holiest contemplations were for a long time intruded on by distractions from the past. Here again Fenelon taught him how to baffle these insidious tormenters, by laying his heart at the foot of the cross, and steadily prosecuting his devotions instead of turning to contend with dark shadows.

Finally, one of the firmest hopes and the most earnest and constant of the prayers of this Catholic minister was, that he might be witness to the happiness of his Protestant friends in another world; and the thought of seeing "Mary in Heaven" would frequently support him when his spirit tottered under the burden of his recollections.

Lady Vernon saw her daughter comparatively happy, and moderated her chagrin at perceiving that there was no chance of ever bringing her to accept the hand of any suitor. For the rest, let it be enough to say, that, remarkably circumstanced as Mary and Fitzmaurice were, no tongue was ever heard to utter, nor mind known to harbour a sentiment injurious to the reputation of either. Kindly thoughts of Mary Vernon will long be cherished as traditional inheritances by many a warm heart in those wild regions; and the active virtues of Gerald Fitzmaurice O'Neil, his self-denial, his zeal in his profession, and the honest plainness of his course in the prosecution of his arduous duties, are to this day recalled as examples for priestly imitation.

THE ELVES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF TIECK. BY THOMAS CARLYLE.

"Where is our little Mary?" said the father.

"She is playing out upon the green there, with our neighbour's boy," replied the mother.

"I wish they may not run away and lose themselves," said he; "they are so thoughtless."

The mother looked for the little ones, and brought them their evening luncheon. "It is warm," said the boy; "and Mary had a longing for the red cherries."

"Have a care, children," said the mother, "and do not run too far from home, and not into the wood; father and I are going to the fields."

Little Andres answered: "Never fear, the wood frightens us; we shall sit here by the house, where there are people near us."

The mother went in, and soon came out again with her husband. They locked the door, and turned towards the fields to look after their labourers, and see their hay-harvest in the meadow. Their house lay upon a little green height, encircled by a pretty ring of paling, which likewise enclosed their fruit and flower garden. The hamlet stretched somewhat deeper down, and on the other side lay the castle of the Count. Martin rented the large farm from this nobleman; and was living in contentment with his wife and only child; for he yearly saved some money, and had the prospect of becoming a man of substance by his industry, for the ground was productive, and the Count not illiberal.

As he walked with his wife to the fields, he gazed cheerfully round, and said: "What a different look this quarter has, Brigitta, from the place we lived in formerly! Here it is all so green; the whole village is bedecked with thick-spreading fruit-trees; the ground is full of beautiful herbs and flowers; all

the houses are cheerful and cleanly, the inhabitants are at their ease: nay, I could almost fancy that the woods are greener here than elsewhere, and the sky bluer; and, so far as the eye can reach, you have pleasure and delight in beholding the bountiful Earth."

"And whenever you cross the stream," said Brigitta, "you are, as it were, in another world, all is so dreary and withered; but every traveller declares that our village is the fairest in the country far and near."

"All but that fir-ground," said her husband; "do but look back to it, how dark and dismal that solitary spot is lying in the gay scene; the dingy fir-trees with the smoky huts behind them, the ruined stalls, the brook flowing past with a sluggish melancholy."

"It is true," replied Brigitta; "if you but approach that spot, you grow disconsolate and sad, you know not why. What sort of people can they be that live there, and keep themselves so separate from the rest of us, as if they had an evil conscience?"

"A miserable crew," replied the young farmer: "gypsies, seemingly, that steal and cheat in other quarters, and have their hoard and hiding-place here. I wonder only that his lordship suffers them."

"Who knows," said the wife, with an accent of pity, "but perhaps they may be poor people, wishing, out of shame, to conceal their poverty; for, after all, no one can say aught ill of them; the only thing is, that they do not go to church, and none knows how they live; for the little garden, which indeed seems altogether waste, cannot possibly support them; and fields they have none."

"God knows," said Martin, as they went along, "what trade they follow; no mortal comes to them; for the place they live in is as if bewitched and excommunicated, so that even our wildest fellows will not venture into it."

Such conversation they pursued, while walking to the fields. That gloomy spot they spoke of lay aside from the hamlet. In a dell, begirt with firs, you might behold a hut, and various ruined office-houses; rarely was smoke seen to mount from it, still more rarely did men appear there; though at times curious people, venturing somewhat nearer, had perceived upon the bench before the hut, some hideous women, in ragged clothes, dandling in their arms some children equally dirty and ill-favoured; black dogs were running up and down upon the boundary; and, of an evening, a man of monstrous size was seen to cross the foot-bridge of the brook, and disappear in the hut; and, in the darkness, various shapes were observed, moving like shadows round a fire in the open air. This piece of ground, the firs, and the ruined huts, formed in truth a strange contrast with the bright green landscape, the white houses of the hamlet, and the stately new-built castle.

The two little ones had now eaten their fruit; it came into their heads to run races; and the little nimble Mary always got the start of the less active Andres. "It is not fair," cried Andres at last: "let us try it for some length, then we shall see who wins."

"As thou wilt," said Mary; "only to the brook we must not run."

"No," said Andres; "but there, on the hill, stands the large pear-tree, a quarter of a mile from this. I shall run by the left, round past the fir-ground; thou canst try it by the right over the fields; so we do not meet till we get up, and then we shall see which of us is swifter."

"Done," cried Mary, and began to run; "for we shall not mar one another by the way, and my father says it is as far to the hill by that side of the Gypsies' house as by this."

Andres had already started, and Mary, turning to the right, could no longer see him. "It is very silly," said she to herself: "I have only to take heart, and run along the bridge, past the hut, and through the yard, and I shall certainly be first." She was already standing by the brook and the clump of firs. "Shall I? No: it is too frightful," said she. A little white dog was standing on the farther side, and barking with might and main. In her terror, Mary thought the dog some monster, and sprang back. "Fy! fy!" said she: "the dolt is gone half way by this time, while I stand here considering." The little dog kept barking, and, as she looked at it more narrowly, it seemed no longer frightful, but, on the contrary, quite pretty: it had a red collar round its neck, with a glittering bell; and as it raised its head, and shook itself in barking, the little bell sounded with the finest tinkle. "Well, I must risk it!" cried she: "I will run for life; quick, quick, I am through; certainly to Heaven, they cannot eat me up alive in half a minute!" And with this, the gay, courageous, little Mary, sprang along the foot-bridge; passed the dog, which ceased its barking, and began to fawn on her; and in

a moment she was standing on the other bank, and the black firs all round concealed from view her father's house, and the rest of the landscape.

But what was her astonishment when here! The loveliest, most variegated flower-garden, lay round her; tulips, roses, and lilies, were glittering in the fairest colours; blue and gold-red butterflies were wavering in the blossoms; cages of shining wire were hung on the espaliers, with many-coloured birds in them, singing beautiful songs; and children, in short white frocks, with flowing yellow hair and brilliant eyes, were frolicking about; some playing with lambkins, some feeding the birds, or gathering flowers, and giving them to one another; some, again, were eating cherries, grapes, and ruddy apricots. No hut was to be seen; but instead of it, a large fair house, with a brazen door and lofty statues, stood glancing in the middle of the space. Mary was confounded with surprise, and knew not what to think; but, not being bashful, she went right up to the first of the children, held out her hand, and wished the little creature good even.

"Art thou come to visit us, then?" said the glittering child; "I saw thee running, playing on the other side, but thou wert frightened for our little dog."

"So you are not gypsies and rogues," said Mary, "as Andres always told me! He is a stupid thing, and talks of much he does not understand."

"Stay with us," said the strange little girl; "thou wilt like it well."

"But we are running a race."

"Thou wilt find thy comrade soon enough. There, take and eat."

Mary ate, and found the fruit more sweet than any she had ever tasted in her life before; and Andres, and the race, and the prohibition of her parents, were entirely forgotten.

A stately woman, in a shining robe, came towards them, and asked about the stranger child. "Fairest lady," said Mary, "I came running hither by chance, and now they wish to keep me."

"Thou art aware, Zerina," said the lady, "that she can be here but for a little while; besides, thou should'st have asked my leave."

"I thought," said Zerina, "when I saw her admitted across the bridge, that I might do it; we have often seen her running in the fields, and thou thyself hast taken pleasure in her lively temper. She will have to leave us soon enough."

"No, I will stay here," said the little stranger; "for here it is so beautiful, and here I shall find the prettiest playthings, and store of berries and cherries to boot. On the other side it is not half so grand."

The gold-robed lady went away with a smile; and many of the children now came bounding round the happy Mary in their mirth, and twitched her, and incited her to dance; others brought her lambs, or curious playthings; others made music on instruments, and sang to it.

She kept, however, by the playmate who had first met her; for Zerina was the kindest and loveliest of them all. Little Mary cried and cried again: "I will stay with you for ever; I will stay with you, and you shall be my sisters;" at which the children all laughed, and embraced her. "Now, we shall have a royal sport," said Zerina. She ran into the palace, and returned with a little golden box, in which lay a quantity of seeds, like glittering dust. She lifted of it with her little hand, and scattered some grains on the green earth. Instantly the grass began to move, as in waves; and, after a few moments, bright rose-bushes started from the ground, shot rapidly up, and budded all at once, while the sweetest perfume filled the place. Mary also took a little of the dust, and, having scattered it, she saw white lilies, and the most variegated pinks, pushing up. At a signal from Zerina, the flowers disappeared, and others rose in their room. "Now," said Zerina, "look for something greater." She laid two pine-seeds in the ground, and stamped them in sharply with her foot. Two green bushes stood before them. "Grasp me fast," said she; and Mary threw her arms about the slender form. She felt herself borne upwards; for the trees were springing under them with the greatest speed; the tall pines waved to and fro, and the two children held each other fast embraced, swinging this way and that in the red clouds of the twilight, and kissed each other; while the rest were climbing up and down the trunks with quick dexterity, pushing and teazing one another with loud laughter when they met; if any one fell down in the press, it flew through the air, and sank slowly and surely to the ground. At length Mary was beginning to be frightened; and the other little child sang a few loud tones, and the trees again sank down, and set them on the ground as gradually as they had lifted them before to the clouds.

They next went through the brazen door

of the palace. Here many fair women, elderly and young, were sitting in the round hall, partaking of the fairest fruits, and listening to glorious invisible music. In the vaulting of the ceiling, palms, flowers, and groves stood painted, among which little figures of children were sporting and winding in every graceful posture; and with the tones of the music, the images altered and glowed with the most burning colours; now the blue and green were sparkling like radiant light, now these tints faded back in paleness, the purple flamed up, and the gold took fire; and then the naked children seemed to be alive among the flower-garlands, and to draw breath, and emit it through their ruby-coloured lips; so that by fits you could see the glance of their little white teeth, and the lighting up of their azure eyes.

From the hall, a stair of brass led down to a subterranean chamber. Here lay much gold and silver, and precious stones of every hue shone out between them. Strange vessels stood along the walls, and all seemed filled with costly things. The gold was worked into many forms, and glittered with the friendliest red. Many little dwarfs were busied sorting the pieces from the heap, and putting them in the vessels; others, hunch-backed, and bandy-legged, with long red noses, were tottering slowly along, half-bent to the ground, under full sacks, which they bore as millers do their grain; and, with much panting, shaking out the gold-dust on the ground. Then they darted awkwardly to the right and left, and caught the rolling balls that were like to run away; and it happened now and then that one in his eagerness overset the other, so that both fell heavily and clumsily to the ground. They made angry faces, and looked askance, as Mary laughed at their gestures and their ugliness. Behind them sat an old crumpled little man, whom Zerina reverently greeted; he thanked her with a grave inclination of his head. He held a sceptre in his hand, and wore a crown upon his brow, and all the other dwarfs appeared to regard him as their master, and obey his nod.

"What more wanted?" asked he, with a surly voice, as the children came a little nearer. Mary was afraid, and did not speak; but her companion answered, they were only come to look about them in the chambers. "Still your old child's tricks!" replied the dwarf: "Will there never be an end to idleness?" With this, he turned again to his employment, kept his people weighing and sorting the ingots; some he sent away on errands, some he chid with angry tones.

"Who is the gentleman?" said Mary.

"Our Metal-Prince," replied Zerina, as they walked along.

They seemed once more to reach the open air, for they were standing by a lake, yet no sun appeared, and they saw no sky above their heads. A little boat received them, and Zerina steered it diligently forwards. It shot rapidly along. On gaining the middle of the lake, the stranger saw that multitudes of pipes, channels, and brooks, were spreading from the little sea in every direction. "These waters to the right," said Zerina, "flow beneath your garden, and this is why it blooms so freshly; by the other side we get down into the great stream." On a sudden, out of all the channels, and from every quarter of the lake, came a crowd of little children swimming up; some wore garlands of sedge and water-lily; some had red stems of coral, others were blowing on crooked shells; a tumultuous noise echoed merrily from the dark shores; among the children might be seen the fairest women sporting in the waters, and often several of the children sprang about some one of them, and with kisses hung upon her neck and shoulders. All saluted the strangers; and these steered onwards through the revelry out of the lake, into a little river, which grew narrower and narrower. At last the boat came aground. The strangers took their leave, and Zerina knocked against the cliff. This opened like a door, and a female form, all red, assisted them to mount. "Are you all brisk here?" inquired Zerina.

"They are just at work," replied the other, "and happy as they could wish; indeed, the heat is very pleasant."

They went up a winding stair, and on a sudden Mary found herself in a most resplendent hall, so that, as she entered, her eyes were dazzled by the radiance. Flame-coloured tapestry covered the walls with a purple glow; and when her eye had grown a little used to it, the stranger saw, to her astonishment, that, in the tapestry, there were figures moving up and down in dancing joyfulness; in form so beautiful, and of so fair proportions, that nothing could be seen more graceful; their bodies were as of red crystal, so that it appeared as if the blood were visible within them, flowing and playing in its courses. They smiled on the stranger, and saluted her with various bows; but as Mary

was about approaching nearer them, Zerina plucked her sharply back, crying: "Thou wilt burn thyself, my little Mary, for the whole of it is fire."

Mary felt the heat, "Why do the pretty creatures not come out," said she, "and play with us?"

"As thou livest in the Air," replied the other, "so are they obliged to stay continually in Fire, and would faint and languish if they left it. Look now, how glad they are, how they laugh and shout; those down below spread out the fire-floods every where beneath the earth, and thereby the flowers, and fruits, and wine, are made to flourish; these red streams, again, are to run beside the brooks of water; and thus the fiery creatures are kept ever busy and glad. But for thee it is too hot here; let us return to the garden."

In the garden, the scene had changed since they left it. The moonshine was lying on every flower; the birds were silent, and the children were asleep in complicated groups, among the green groves. Mary and her friend, however, did not feel fatigue, but walked about in the warm summer night, in abundant talk, till morning.

When the day dawned, they refreshed themselves on fruit and milk, and Mary said: "Suppose we go, by way of change, to the firs, and see how things look there?"

"With all my heart," replied Zerina; "thou wilt see our watchmen, too, and they will surely please thee; they are standing up among the trees on the mound." The two proceeded through the flower garden by pleasant groves, full of nightingales; then they ascended a vine-hill; and at last, after long following the windings of a clear brook, arrived at the firs, and the height which bounded the domain. "How does it come," said Mary, "that we have to walk so far here, when, without, the circuit is so narrow?"

"I know not," said her friend; "but so it is."

They mounted to the dark firs, and a chill wind blew from without in their faces; a haze seemed lying far and wide over the landscape. On the top were many strange forms standing; with mealy, dusty faces; their mis-shapen heads not unlike those of white owls; they were clad in folded cloaks of shaggy wool; they held umbrellas of curious skins stretched out above them; and they waved and fanned themselves incessantly with large bat's wings, which flared out curiously beside the woollen roquelaures.

"I could laugh, yet I am frightened," cried Mary.

"These are our good trusty watchmen," said her playmate; "they stand here and wave their fans, that cold anxiety and inexplicable fear may fall on every one that attempts to approach us. They are covered so, because without it is now cold and rainy, which they cannot bear. But snow, or wind, or cold air, never reaches down to us; here is an everlasting spring and summer: yet if these poor people on the top were not frequently relieved, they would certainly perish."

"But who are you, then?" said Mary, while again descending to the flowery fragrance; "or have you no name at all?"

"We are called the Elves," replied the friendly child; "people talk about us in the Earth, as I have heard."

They now perceived a mighty bustle on the green. "The fair Bird is come!" cried the children to them: all hastened to the hall. Here, as they approached, young and old were crowding over the threshold, all shouting for joy; and from within resounded a triumphant peal of music. Having entered, they perceived the vast circuit filled with the most varied forms, and all were looking upwards to a large Bird with glancing plumage, that was sweeping slowly round in the dome, and in its stately flight describing many a circle. The music sounded more gaily than before; the colours and lights alternated more rapidly. At last the music ceased; and the Bird, with a rustling noise, floated down upon a glittering crown that hung hovering in air under the high window, by which the hall was lighted from above. His plumage was purple and green, and shining golden streaks played through it; on his head there waved a diadem of feathers, so resplendent that they glanced like jewels. His bill was red, and his legs of a glancing blue. As he moved, the tints gleamed through each other, and the eye was charmed with their radiance. His size was as that of an eagle. But now he opened his glittering beak; and sweetest melodies came pouring from his moved breast, in finer tones than the love-sick nightingale gives forth; still stronger rose the song, and streamed like floods of Light, so that all, the very children themselves, were moved by it to tears of joy and rapture. When he ceased, all bowed before him; he again flew round the dome in circles, then darted through the door, and soared into the light heaven, where he shone far up like a red point, and then soon vanished from their eyes.

"Why are ye all so glad?" inquired Mary, bending to her fair playmate, who seemed smaller than yesterday.

"The King is coming!" said the little one; "many of us have never seen him, and whithersoever he turns his face, there is happiness and mirth; we have long looked for him, more anxiously than you look for spring when winter lingers with you; and now he has announced, by his fair herald, that he is at hand. This wise and glorious Bird, that has been sent to us by the King, is called Phœnix; he dwells far off in Arabia, on a tree, which there is no other that resembles on Earth, as in like manner there is no second Phœnix. When he feels himself grown old, he builds a pile of balm and incense, kindles it, and dies singing; and then from the fragrant ashes, soars up the renewed Phœnix with unlessened beauty. It is seldom he so wings his course that men behold him; and when once in centuries this does occur, they note it in their annals, and expect remarkable events. But now, my friend, thou and I must part; for the sight of the King is not permitted thee."

Then the lady with the golden robe came through the throng, and beckoning Mary to her, led her into a sequestered walk. "Thou must leave us, my dear child," said she; "the King is to hold his court here for twenty years, perhaps longer; and fruitfulness and blessings will spread far over the land, but chiefly here beside us; all the brooks and rivulets will become more bountiful, all the fields and gardens richer, the wine more generous, the meadows more fertile, and the woods more fresh and green; a milder air will blow, no hail shall hurt, no flood shall threaten. Take this ring, and think of us: but beware of telling any one of our existence; or we must fly this land, and thou and all around will lose the happiness and blessing of our neighbourhood. Once more, kiss thy playmate, and farewell." They issued from the walk; Zerina wept, Mary stooped to embrace her, and they parted. Already she was on the narrow bridge; the cold air was blowing on her back from the firs; the little dog barked with all its might, and rang its little bell; she looked round, then hastened over, for the darkness of the firs, the bleakness of the ruined huts, the shadows of the twilight, were filling her with terror.

"What a night my parents must have had on my account!" said she within herself, as she stept on the green; "and I dare not tell them where I have been, or what wonders I have witnessed, nor indeed would they believe me." Two men passing by saluted her, and as they went along, she heard them say: "What a pretty girl! Where can she come from?" With quickened steps she approached the house: but the trees which were hanging last night loaded with fruit, were now standing dry and leafless; the house was differently painted, and a new barn had been built beside it. Mary was amazed, and thought she must be dreaming. In this perplexity she opened the door; and behind the table sat her father, between an unknown woman and a stranger youth. "Good God! Father," cried she, "where is my mother?"

"Thy mother!" said the woman, with a forecasting tone, and sprang towards her: "Ha, thou surely canst not—Yes, indeed, indeed thou art my lost, long-lost dear, only Mary!" She had recognised her by a little brown mole beneath the chin, as well as by her eyes and shape. All embraced her, all were moved with joy, and the parents wept. Mary was astonished that she almost reached to her father's stature; and she could not understand how her mother had become so changed and faded; she asked the name of the stranger youth. "It is our neighbour's Andres," said Martin. "How comest thou to us again, so unexpectedly, after seven long years? Where hast thou been? Why didst thou never send us tidings of thee?"

"Seven years!" said Mary, and could not order her ideas and recollections. "Seven whole years?"

"Yes, yes," said Andres, laughing, and shaking her trustfully by the hand; "I have won the race, good Mary; I was at the pear-tree and back again seven years ago, and thou, sluggish creature, art but just returned!"

They again asked, they pressed her; but remembering her instruction, she could answer nothing. It was they themselves chiefly that, by degrees, shaped a story for her: How, having lost her way, she had been taken up by a coach, and carried to a strange remote part, where she could not give the people any notion of her parents' residence; how she was conducted to a distant town, where certain worthy persons brought her up, and loved her; how they had lately died, and at length she had recollected her birth-place, and so returned. "No matter how it is!" exclaimed her mother; "enough, that we have thee again, my little daughter, my own, my all!"

Andres waited supper, and Mary could not be at home in any thing she saw. The house seemed small and dark; she felt astonished at her dress, which was clean and simple, but appeared quite foreign; she looked at the ring on her finger, and the gold of it glittered strangely, enclosing a stone of burning red. To her father's question, she replied that the ring also was a present from her benefactors.

She was glad when the hour of sleep arrived, and she hastened to her bed. Next morning she felt much more collected; she had now arranged her thoughts a little, and could better stand the questions of the people in the village, all of whom came in to bid her welcome. Andres was there too with the earliest, active, glad, and serviceable beyond all others. The blooming maiden of fifteen had made a deep impression on him; he had passed a sleepless night. The people of the castle likewise sent for Mary, and she had once more to tell her story to them, which was now grown quite familiar to her. The old Count and his Lady were surprised at her good breeding; she was modest, but not embarrassed; she made answer courteously in good phrases to all their questions; all fear of noble persons and their equipage had passed away from her; for when she measured these halls and forms by the wonders and the high beauty she had seen with the Elves in their hidden abode, this earthly splendour seemed but dim to her, the presence of men was almost mean. The young lords were charmed with her beauty.

It was now February. The trees were budding earlier than usual; the nightingale had never come so soon; the spring rose fairer in the land than the oldest men could recollect it. In every quarter, little brooks gushed out to irrigate the pastures and meadows; the hills seemed heaving, the vines rose higher and higher, the fruit-trees blossomed as they had never done; and a swelling fragrant blessedness hung suspended heavily in rosy clouds over the scene. All prospered beyond expectation; no rude day, no tempest injured the fruits; the wine flowed blushing in immense grapes; and the inhabitants of the place felt astonished, and were captivated as in a sweet dream. The next year was like its forerunner; but men had now become accustomed to the marvellous. In autumn, Mary yielded to the pressing entreaties of Andres and her parents; she was betrothed to him, and in winter they were married.

She often thought with inward longing of her residence behind the fir-trees; she continued serious and still. Beautiful as all that lay around her was, she knew of something yet more beautiful; and from the remembrance of this, a faint regret attuned her nature to soft melancholy. It smote her painfully when her father and mother talked about the gypsies and vagabonds, that dwelt in the dark spot of ground. Often she was on the point of speaking out in defence of those good beings, whom she knew to be the benefactors of the land; especially to Andres, who appeared to take delight in zealously abusing them: yet still she repressed the word that was struggling to escape her bosom. So passed this year; in the next she was solaced by a little daughter, whom she named Elfrida, thinking of the designation of her friendly Elves.

The young people lived with Martin and Brigitta, the house being large enough for all; and helped their parents in conducting their now extended husbandry. The little Elfrida soon displayed peculiar faculties and gifts; for she could walk at a very early age, and could speak perfectly before she was a twelvemonth old; and after some few years, she had become so wise and clever, and of such wondrous beauty, that all people regarded her with astonishment; and her mother could not keep away the thought that her child resembled one of those shining little ones in the space behind the Firs. Elfrida cared not to be with other children; but seemed to avoid, with a sort of horror, their tumultuous amusements, and liked best to be alone. She would then retire into a corner of the garden, and read, or work diligently with her needle; often also you might see her sitting, as if deep sunk in thought; or violently walking up and down the alleys, speaking to herself. Her parents readily allowed her to have her will in these things, for she was healthy, and waxed apace; only her strange sagacious answers and observations often made them anxious. "Such wise children do not grow to age," her grandmother, Brigitta, many times observed; "they are too good for this world; the child, besides, is beautiful beyond nature, and will never find its proper place on Earth."

The little girl had this peculiarity, that she was very loath to let herself be served by any one, but endeavoured to do every thing herself. She was almost the earliest riser in the house; she washed herself carefully, and

dressed without assistance: at night she was equally careful; she took special heed to pack up her clothes and washes with her own hands, allowing no one, not even her mother, to meddle with her articles. The mother humoured her in this caprice, not thinking it of any consequence. But what was her astonishment, when, happening one holiday to insist, regardless of Elfrida's tears and screams, on dressing her out for a visit to the castle, she found upon her breast, suspended by a string, a piece of gold of a strange form, which she directly recognized as one of that sort she had seen in such abundance in the subterranean vault! The little thing was greatly frightened, and at last confessed that she had found it in the garden, and as she liked it much, had kept it carefully: she at the same time prayed so earnestly and pressingly to have it back, that Mary fastened it again on its former place, and, full of thoughts, went out with her in silence to the castle.

Sidewards from the farm-house lay some offices for the storing of produce and implements; and behind these there was a little green, with an old grove, now visited by no one, as, from the new arrangement of the buildings, it lay too far from the garden. In this solitude, Elfrida delighted most; and it occurred to nobody to interrupt her here, so that frequently her parents did not see her for half a day. One afternoon her mother chanced to be in these buildings, seeking for some lost article among the lumber, and she noticed that a beam of light was coming in, through a chink in the wall. She took a thought of looking through this aperture, and seeing what her child was busied with; and it happened that a stone was lying loose, and could be pushed aside, so that she obtained a view right into the grove. Elfrida was sitting there on a little bench, and beside her the well-known Zerina; and the children were playing and amusing one another in the kindliest unity. The Elf embraced her beautiful companion, and said mournfully: "Ah! dear little creature, as I sport with thee, so have I sported with thy mother, when she was a child; but you mortals so soon grow tall and thoughtful! It is very hard: wert thou but to be a child as long as I!"

"Willingly would I do it," said Elfrida; "but they all say I shall come to sense, and give over playing altogether; for I have great gifts, as they think, for growing wise. Ah! and then I shall see thee no more, thou dear Zerina! Yet it is with us, as with the fruit-tree flowers: how glorious the blossoming apple-tree, with its red bursting buds! It looks so stately and broad, and every one that passes under it thinks, surely something great will come of it; then the sun grows hot, and the buds come joyfully forth; but the wicked kernel is already there, which pushes off and casts away the fair flower's dress; and now, in pain and waxing, it can do nothing more, but must grow to fruit in harvest. An apple, to be sure, is pretty and refreshing; yet nothing to the blossom of spring. So is it also with us mortals: I am not glad in the least at growing to be a tall girl. Ah! could I but once visit you!"

"Since the King is with us," said Zerina, "it is quite impossible; but I will come to thee, my darling, often, often, and none shall see me either here or there. I will pass invisible through the air, or fly over to thee like a bird: Oh! we will be much, much together, while thou art still little. What can I do to please thee?"

"Thou must like me very dearly," said Elfrida, "as I like thee in my heart: but come, let us make another rose."

Zerina took the well-known box from her bosom, threw two grains from it on the ground; and instantly a green bush stood before them, with two deep-red roses, bending their heads, as if to kiss each other. The children plucked them smiling, and the bush disappeared. "O that it would not die so soon!" said Elfrida; "this red child, this wonder of the Earth!"

"Give it me here," said the little Elf; then breathed thrice upon the budding rose, and kissed it thrice, "Now," said she, giving back the rose, "it will continue fresh and blooming till winter."

"I will keep it," said Elfrida, "as an image of thee; I will guard it in my little room, and kiss it night and morning, as if it were thyself."

"The sun is setting," said the other, "I must home." They embraced again, and Zerina vanished.

In the evening, Mary clasped her child to her breast, with a feeling of alarm and veneration. She henceforth allowed the good little girl more liberty than formerly; and often calmed her husband, when he came to search for the child; which for some time he was wont to do, as her retiredness did not please him, and he feared that, in the end, it might make her silly, or even pervert her understanding. The mother often glided to

the chink; and almost always found the bright Elf beside her child, employed in sport, or in earnest conversation.

"Wouldst thou like to fly?" inquired Zerina, once.

"Oh, well! How well!" replied Elfrida; and the fairy clasped her mortal playmate in her arms, and mounted with her from the ground, till they hovered above the grove. The mother, in alarm, forgot herself, and pushed out her head in terror to look after them; when Zerina, from the air, held up her finger, and threatened, yet smiled; then descended with the child, embraced her, and disappeared. After this, it happened more than once that Mary was observed by her; and every time, the shining little creature shook her head, or threatened, yet with friendly looks.

Often, in disputing with her husband, Mary had said in her zeal: "Thou dost injustice to the poor people in the hut!" But when Andres pressed her to explain why she differed in opinion from the whole village, nay, from his Lordship himself; and how she could understand it better than the whole of them, she still broke off embarrassed, and became silent. One day, after dinner, Andres grew more violent than ever; and maintained that, by one means or another, the crew must be packed away, as a nuisance to the country; when his wife in anger said to him: "Hush! for they are benefactors to thee and to every one of us."

"Benefactors!" cried the other in astonishment: "These rogues and vagabonds!"

In her indignation, she was now at last tempted to relate to him, under promise of the strictest secrecy, the history of her youth: and as Andres at every word grew more incredulous, and shook his head in mockery, she took him by the hand and led him to the chink: where, to his amazement, he beheld the glittering Elf sporting with his child, and caressing her in the grove. He knew not what to say; an exclamation of astonishment escaped him, and Zerina raised her eyes. On the instant she grew pale, and trembled violently; not with friendly, but with indignant looks, she made the sign of threatening, and then said to Elfrida: "Thou canst not help it, dearest heart; but they will never learn sense, wise as they believe themselves." She embraced the little one with stormy haste; and then, in the shape of a raven, flew with hoarse cries over the garden, towards the Firs.

In the evening, the little one was very still, she kissed her rose with tears; Mary felt depressed and frightened, Andres scarcely spoke. It grew dark. Suddenly there went a rustling through the trees; birds flew to and fro with wild screaming, thunder was heard to roll, the Earth shook, and tones of lamentation moaned in the air. Andres and his wife had not courage to rise; they shrouded themselves within the curtains, and with fear and trembling awaited the day. Towards morning it grew calmer; and all was silent when the Sun, with his cheerful light, rose over the wood.

Andres dressed himself, and Mary now observed that the stone of the ring upon her finger had become quite pale. On opening the door, the sun shone clear on their faces, but the scene around them they could scarcely recognise. The freshness of the wood was gone; the hills were shrunk, the brooks were flowing languidly with scanty streams, the sky seemed gray; and when you turned to the Firs, they were standing there, no darker or more dreary than the other trees. The huts behind them were no longer frightful; and several inhabitants of the village came and told about the fearful night, and how they had been across the spot where the gypsies had lived; how these people must have left the place at last, for their huts were standing empty, and within had quite a common look, just like the dwellings of other poor people: some of their household gear was left behind.

Elfrida in secret said to her mother: "I could not sleep last night; and in my fright at the noise, I was praying from the bottom of my heart, when the door suddenly opened, and my playmate entered to take leave of me. She had a travelling-pouch slung round her, a hat on her head, and a large staff in her hand. She was very angry at thee; since on thy account she had now to suffer the severest and most painful punishments, as she had always been so fond of thee; for all of them, she said, were very loath to leave this quarter."

Mary forbade her to speak of this; and now the ferrymen came across the river, and told them new wonders. As it was growing dark, a stranger man of large size had come to him, and hired his boat till sunrise; and with this condition, that the boatman should remain quiet in his house, at least should not cross the threshold of his door. "I was frightened," continued the old man, "and the strange bargain would not let me sleep. I slipped softly to the window, and looked

towards the river. Great clouds were driving restlessly through the sky, and the distant woods were rustling fearfully; it was as if my cottage shook, and moans and lamentations glided round it. On a sudden I perceived a white streaming light, that grew broader and broader, like many thousands of falling stars; sparkling and waving, it proceeded forward from the dark Fir-ground, moved over the fields, and spread itself along towards the river. Then I heard a trampling, a jingling, a bustling, and rushing, nearer and nearer; it went forwards to my boat, and all stept into it, men and women, as it seemed, and children; and the tall stranger ferried them over. In the river were by the boat swimming many thousands of glittering forms; in the air, white clouds and lights were wavering; and all lamented and bewailed that they must travel forth so far, far away, and leave their beloved dwelling. The noise of the rudder and the water creaked and gurgled between whiles, and then suddenly there would be silence. Many a time the boat landed, and went back, and was again laden; many heavy casks, too, they took along with them, which multitudes of horrid-looking little fellows carried and rolled; whether they were devils or goblins, Heaven only knows. Then came, in waving brightness, a stately freight; it seemed an old man mounted on a small white horse, and all were crowding round him. I saw nothing of the horse but its head; for the rest of it was covered with costly glittering cloths and trappings: on his brow the old man had a crown, so bright, that as he came across I thought the sun was rising there, and the redness of the dawn glimmering in my eyes. Thus it went on all night; I at last fell asleep in the tumult, half in joy, half in terror. In the morning all was still; but the river is, as it were, run off, and I know not how I am to steer my boat in it now."

The same year there came a blight; the woods died away, the springs ran dry; and the scene, which had once been the joy of every traveller, was in autumn standing waste, naked, and bald; scarcely showing here and there, in the sea of sand, a spot or two where grass, with a dingy greenness, still grew up. The fruit-trees all withered, the vines faded away, and the aspect of the place became so melancholy, that the Count, with his people, next year left the castle, which in time decayed and fell to ruins.

Elfrida gazed on her rose day and night with deep longing, and thought of her kind playmate; and as it drooped and withered, so did she also hang her head; and before the spring, the little maiden had herself faded away. Mary often stood upon the spot before the hut, and wept for the happiness that had departed. She wasted herself away like her child, and in a few years she too was gone. Old Martin, with his son-in-law, returned to the quarter where he had lived before.

MRS. MARK LUKE; OR, WEST COUNTRY EXCLUSIVES.

BY MRS. JOHNSTONE.

CHAPTER I.

With Prince Muskwa Puckler, and other travellers of like note, we hold it a mistake to imagine, that *Exclusivism*, — or the principle of keeping others without a certain pale, and boasting of being within it ourselves, while we only scramble to gain admittance, — is to be found solely in what is termed Fashionable Life, and among persons of high station. The *Exclusives*, properly so called, — those who enjoy the privilege of dancing in Willis's Rooms on certain nights, and dining and gaming at Crockford's, or the more select clubs, — form, after all, but the inner circle of a concentric series, which, somewhat like chain-mail, link within link, covers the entire surface of British society, save the few dark depths unpenetrated by the feeblest ray of the sun of Fashion.

The proper order of Metropolitan Exclusives we accordingly hold to be merely the sun of a system continually revolving with and around that central sphere. "Human nature is every where the same," say the sages. It is but a difference in mode which exists between the Countess of G——, snatching a crow-quill from a golden standish, and, by concurrence of the patronesses, remorselessly dashing off the sentence of exclusion which dooms to disappointment and despair the Honourable Mrs. H—— and her fair *debutante* of the season; and Maggy Mucklebacket, who, having attained the respectability of dealing in haddocks and flounders, in the amplitude

of her yellow petticoats, looks disdain on draggle-tailed Nance Prawns, who, she contemptuously observes, in passing, "will never get aboon the mussel line." *Property* is, as in this last case, one element of Exclusivism, though it is often the least essential one.

The aristocratic Exclusives certainly possess some advantages over the less prominent species of the Order. They have both a better defined line of demarcation, and a much narrower frontier to defend; one guarded, too, by many artificial bulwarks, unknown in the open champaign, or great levels, of society.

In provincial situations, and even in such towns as Bath, York, and Edinburgh, the defences are, from natural and obvious causes, far less impregnable than in London. Again, in localities where there is a class of gentry and another of professional people, the danger of the caste immediately below, breaking through the out-works, and either sapping and mining, or forcing their way forward, is not nearly so great as in such places as Birmingham, Liverpool, and Glasgow, where the professional section is closely dependent upon the commercial division, and where there are few or no gentry. But this is again counterbalanced by the great traffickers and manufacturers of the trading towns, *keeping out* the smaller fry of retail dealers and tradesmen.

The Central Exclusives, — those whose head-quarters is in the metropolis, possess another immense advantage over all provincialists, from acting in combination and as one compact alert body, whose decision is law, and whose laws are like those of the Medes and Persians. The Central Exclusives — those of Almacks and the Clubs — form, in fact, the best organized Union in the three kingdoms.

But if it be a mistake to believe that Exclusivism is confined to a small section among the higher ranks, it is equally so to imagine that the *Exclusives* are a new sect, though, we confess, they have of late become more active and prominent, from having been compelled to stand to their guns by the incessant inroads of the *millionaires*, and other poachers and unqualified persons. We have no doubt that the body may be traced up to the Conquest, when the Norman *Exclusives* crushed the Saxon pretenders. We see them distinctly acting in concert ever after the Restoration; and in the reign of George II., we find from the letters of Horace Walpole, (a choice member of the society,) and from other great authorities, that they were formally incorporated. Then was laid the foundation of Almacks' Society, and then, too, we first perceive the origin of high play in the private apartments of the fair leaders among the *Exclusives*.

Of the Exclusives of the higher caste, we have, for some years past, heard quite enough through their oracles, the fashionable novels. The minor *Exclusives*, — those of the infinite gradations of the middle rank, who occupy the smaller towns, and the genteel villages, are a more fertile and amusing, as well as a more novel subject of study.

Into the high central class there is clearly no forcing a way, though the entrance may sometimes be yielded to immense wealth, and to brilliant talent, especially if found in foreign artists capable of adroit flattery; but in such small places as Bath, military and professional Exclusives, and those of the inferior gentry, will often be seen to approach and amalgamate; though even there the "moneyed interest" is not permitted to intrude too far, at least not *en masse*, upon the military and aristocratic order. Exceptions which may be noted every day, rather confirm than disprove the general rule. Temporary vogue will carry a man forward, and in some localities a blue or red ribbon, and in others an alderman's chain, will at once invest the fortunate wearer with the Brahminical string, and entitle him to the privileges of the highest caste in his immediate neighbourhood.

Many minor considerations affect the principle of Exclusivism. Space is an important element. A man who has made his fortune by sugar and rum in Jamaica has fewer obstacles to contend with than an equally rich distiller or sugar-refiner at home. The reason is obvious. Numbers in this, as in every other condition of human affairs, modify the principle of *Exclusivism*. It can act with force and entire independence only where people are congregated in considerable masses. Hence the London barristers, as a body, *exclude* the inferior order of attorneys; while in Dublin and Edinburgh, the counsellors and solicitors, the advocates and W.S.s, take their whisky-toddy together on pretty familiar and equal terms, agreeing only to keep out, to *exclude*, the tradesmen and shopkeepers.

Professional Exclusivism admits of some few exceptions in favour of commerce. A man who deals in bank notes and bills — who keeps a money-shop, in short — however considered by the higher aristocracy, is

always held as an equal by the gentlemen of the learned professions, though the military order may frequently question his claims. There are two remarkable exceptions allowed among traffickers. Those who deal in wines and in books, if not quite equal in rank, come next in order to the professional Exclusives of the learned faculties, and are freely admitted into their society, particularly if they game and give dinners. Gentlemen farmers formed another exception during the era of war-prices and yeomanry cavalry; while bakers, butchers, shoemakers, haberdashers, &c. &c. &c., can with difficulty rise even by the aid of great wealth and Esquireship, or absolute retirement from business. They may purchase estates, and become squires, and marry women "of condition;" but the way in which their money was acquired must exclude at least that generation. Their gold smells of the shop.

The whist-table and reading-room Exclusives of such small places as Lichfield or Huntingdon, Dumfries or Inverness, are often compelled to give way, on account of their limited numbers, though no Exclusives whatever are more zealous and clamorous in defending the barriers, than those of small towns blessed with a "genteel society." In such localities, the fantastic tricks of the Proteus principle, become most amusing,—the admission of the curate, and the exclusion of the schoolmaster; the welcome to the poor surgeon, and the denial to the rich apothecary; the all-hail to the gay, poor half-pay officer, and the rebuff to the rich smart mercer,—beget exquisite scenes; especially when the interest is complicated by the apothecary having married the niece of the rector, and the haberdasher being betrothed to the sister of the surgeon.

In brief, we hold that this country is as thickly studded with Exclusive circles, as is the sky with stars in a frosty night; and that the only difference between them, magnitude and lustre, is frequently delusive.

It would be an endless task to examine how the circumfluent, and converging bodies of Exclusives affect each other. Their broad distinctions we have pointed out; but thousands of minute ramifications are to be traced. Thus the pretensions to Exclusivism are locally affected by the town, street, dwelling, and the floor thereof, occupied by an aspirant. The pew in church, in which a fair Exclusive in a small town may sit, becomes relatively as important as the box of an Exclusive duchess in the Opera-House. Good birth, added to the wealth of Crœsus, would not, at this day, sustain for one season the pretensions of a fashionable family who lived in the Canongate or Cowgate of Edinburgh, though here resided the court, the nobility, and gentry of Scotland—and though the mansions are the same, and the breath of Heaven smells as wooingly as ever. The Exclusives of Russell Square are, in their rule, quite as rigid against the denizens of Thames Street, as are the more brilliant society of Grosvenor Square against themselves.*

Exclusiveness, though not a more firmly established principle among women than men, is certainly more active in its demonstrations with the sex. The *status* of the wife is, as in all other cases, fixed by the rank of the husband; but there are many peculiarities created by the present condition

* No one can have lived long in this world, without seeing many amusing, and even ludicrous instances of the working of this mischievous spirit. To pass minor ones, we have seen a whole splendid quarter in a city consigned for a time to desertion, and ultimately to degradation, because a rich dealer in gin had bought a palace there. The gin was an objectionable article certainly, but there would, we fear, have been no exception even for mild, innocent milk, or useful shoes. Some years back, one of those many abortive attempts at establishing sociality on equal terms in a proud, provincial city, had a diverting result. Card, and dancing assemblies were projected, upon the *footing* of the society of Almacks!—the admissions to be granted, in the same manner, by a tribunal of patronesses. The wife of an attorney or W.S. of "no family," had, of course, no pretensions, in her own person, to act as one of the Lady patronesses; but it was alleged, that through her influence with her daughter, whose claim from marriage with a small highland laird conferred a qualification for office, she interfered with all claims, and settled them as she pleased, one dissentient lady being sufficient to exclude any claimant from so very select and fashionable a society. Among the black-balled were the wife, and, consequently, the daughters of a medical practitioner, who was, at the same time, a man of ancient family, and a Professor in the University of the town. The misfortune of the excluded family was, that their head practised that branch of his profession cultivated by Dr. Slop; and no "Howdie's wife," as his lady was politely designated, could be admitted into the Northern Almacks!—that was poz.

The case naturally created a great sensation, particularly in the female and fashionable world. Each lady had her partisans; and the rejected candidate was so far successful as to carry her cause to the appellate jurisdiction of Almacks Proper—which certainly ought to be the court of final resort. The memorials were, no doubt, properly weighed and considered by that august tribunal, though the decision was got rid of by a blistering side-wind—a sheer south-easter; it being declared, that "all the parties concerned—the wives and daughters of Writers to the Signet, Scotch Professors, and small Highland lairds—would be held equally inadmissible to Almacks!" The decision, we believe, gave general satisfaction.

of women in Britain. Thus, the daughter of the poor professional man, or military officer, starving in gentility, looks with scorn, not only upon the child of the wealthy tradesman, but upon every young woman of her own rank, who, in similar circumstances with herself, ventures to turn her acquirements to any useful purpose. The son of a poor gentleman may, without degradation, become a tutor, or physician, or clergyman; but if his daughter should condescend to become a governess or music-teacher, she inevitably forfeits caste. She may, with impunity, sink into a dependent or a toad-eater, or exhibit her beauty and talents upon the public stage; but, as a teacher of her own sex, she may be personally respected, but yet she is socially degraded. To earn her bread by other modes of female industry is yet worse. It is a cause of reproach to Southey and Coleridge, which one generation will scarce obliterate, that their wives were milliners,—young women who, instead of remaining idle, useless, and helpless creatures, burdens upon their relatives and society, actually exercised their organs of constructiveness upon gauze and ribbons, to maintain their personal independence and dignity. The biographers of Mrs. Siddons think it necessary to vindicate her memory from the alarming charge of having been, for a short time, a servant in a quiet gentleman's family, —the disgrace of smoothing linen or scrubbing tables being, to a lovely young female, so much greater, it would appear, than the danger and degradation of the exposed condition of a strolling player,—it being, no doubt, so much more difficult to preserve the innate delicacy and propriety of the female character in the kitchen than upon the village stage, where the airs and graces of the young actress, her doublet and hose, and bare bosom, may be exposed with impunity to every bumpkin who can muster a shilling.

These caprices and anomalies of the principle of *Exclusivism* have led, us far away from the story which suggested the above observations—one of Exclusivism as it exists among the minor orders of the middle class, and as it is modified by their peculiar social condition. Many of our readers will be better able to judge of the truth of the portraiture than ourselves, though we consider its faithful resemblance, even where the likeness is but faintly expressed.

About the year of trade, 18—, Mr. Mark Luke was considered one of the most thriving grocers in all Glasgow. He had been many years in business, and was all but set down by the ladies of his neighbourhood as a confirmed bachelor, when a rumour was suddenly revived, that he only waited the expiration of a six months of mourning, to obtain the hand of Miss Barbara Peaston, who had rejected him some seven years before, as neither genteel, nor yet *improveable* in manners or calling.

The mourning was in honour of an aunt by whom the young lady had been brought up, and whose heiress she was declared. Her fortune of £700 would have been "a good something," to Mr. Mark Luke in former years; now his might almost be called a love-match, though the lady, besides her actual *tocher*, had considerable expectations from a brother, who, like many of his compatriots, had gone to the West Indies to make his fortune, and that done, to die as fast as possible, and leave it to his weeping relatives. True, he was young, and might marry, which his sister was indeed continually hoping he would, though she probably never seriously doubted the other conclusion of his history; an event so common, that in looking around upon her female acquaintance with legacies, it seemed only the ordinary and proper course of nature.

Thus the lady possessed both fortune and expectations; and the Trongate had at last the satisfaction of witnessing the consummation of the felicity of Miss Barbara Peaston and Mr. Mark Luke.

So early as nine o'clock, one fine June morning, Miss Penny Parlane, a particular friend of the bride's, arrived at the apartments of Miss Betty Bogle, another intimate friend, to watch, from the window, the chaise roll off with the thrice-blest pair towards the Falls of Clyde, on their wedding jaunt.

"Wedding-jaunt, indeed! as wise-like Mark had staid at home and looked after the shop," said the former lady. "He'll need all his orra pennies to maintain the state of Miss Baby, or I'm far mistaken."

"Ye are not far wrang there, Mem; but as Mrs. Duncan Smith had a marriage-jaunt, how could Baby Peaston put ower with less? —But oh the chaise is long of making its appearance! It's a Tontine chaise—black and green. It went first up the street for the minister, and it's a strucken hour since then, by my watch. What if there should have been another blow-up!"

"So ye heard of the stramash about Mark

wanting to have the power of her tocher?—the swine had near run through the match. It was like to be a dead split upon settlements—he! he! he! However, Baby had wit in her anger. Seeing better could not be, she came o' will, and took simple Mark in her own hand; and I doubt not she'll make her jointure out just as well that way as by contract."

"Ay, a bride come to the years of discretion may be expected to act discreetly;—but surely something has hindered the ceremony."

"I can't think Baby is so much older than Mark, as they say," rejoined Miss Bogle; (Baby was only ten years younger;) "though when I was not the height of that stool, I remember her a great flirt at Mr. Skreecham's singing school, in the Ram's-horn Kirk, with my oldest sister, and just as big and womanlike as she is this day."

"And that will be above thirty years ago," returned the other, in a dry marked tone, dropping her eyes. "I warrant Baby a Dumbarton youth, any way, and that is well known to be six-and-thirty good.—However, that's Mark's business, not ours,—and, no doubt, she will have the more sense to manage him and his family:—but I cannot get over my surprise that so old a friend as you, Miss Bogle, were not invited to witness the ceremony. Ye have heard, no doubt, that the great Mrs. Duncan Smith—though there was some kind of curtshying acquaintance—refused to let her eldest lassie be best maiden at the bridal:—Mean and pitiful as it was of Baby Peaston to ask that small favour at her hand, it was as insolent of Madam Smith to refuse what never is refused. What does that woman think herself, I wonder, that nothing in Glasgow is good enough for her? I had it from a sure hand that her remark was, 'If I let my daughter be bride's maid to a grocer's wife, I suppose I must next visit and be visited by the grocer. I will do no such thing; that sort of people must be kept off from the first,—give them an inch, they'll take an ell.'—But surely that's the chaise now!"

Both ladies once more started to their feet. It was undeniably the Tontine chaise, which whirled past as if conscious of the high destinies it contained.

"Mr. Luke! Mr. Luke!" cried the bride; "do not, I beseech you, look the way of Miss Betty Bogle's windows; there's Penny Parlane's grey eyne, I'm sure, glowering ower the blind to spy ferlies."

And the bride jerked forward her head that the ensconced ladies might have a satisfactory view of her white satin hat and its snowy "swaling" plumes; and then rolled rapidly away to that memorable examination of the Hamilton House Picture Gallery, which enabled Mrs. Mark Luke to descant on the Fine Arts for fifteen years afterwards, and her husband to wonder at her astonishing memory.

"A white satin hat and ostrich feathers!" exclaimed Miss Parlane, throwing herself back on her chair,—"useful, sensible headdress, for Mark Luke's wife!—Will she go behind the counter wi' them? or have the face to put her foot within the Kirk of St. John's decked out in that style, not eight months after her aunty's burial?"

The ladies now proceeded *seriatim* to the discussion of the extravagant *trousseau*, or, as they called it, the *Wedding Sou** of Mrs. Mark Luke. Some half dozen laced nightcaps, in particular, made by a pattern furtively obtained from the laundress of Mrs. Duncan Smith, were enough of themselves to bring down a visible judgment upon the Trongate, and ruin upon the shop and trade of Mr. Mark Luke.

The fair friends were however among the very first to pay their compliments to the bride upon her return from Cora Linn, and afterwards to drink tea with her. Their joint report was, that he was a wonderful kind brother that Bob Peaston in Demerara. Many a ring and silk gown he sent his sister, of which the very moral had been seen in Mr. Trinkum's window in Argyle Street, the day before. However, they daresayed, "Mark could stand it; he had a capital business, and he would need it. Baby had aye boded a silk gown, and she was likely to get a sleeve."

And here our history, limited in space, may leave Mrs. Mark Luke for the next ten years, during which she continued to live and to dress as like the Smiths as possible,—that is to say, as expensively and finely as "circumstances," Mark's "peculiar temper," and her own good sense permitted; for she was only relatively, not positively, either a fool or extravagant.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Mark Luke had so extended his trade and prospered in all his shares, and stocks, and speculations, that he was considered a very wealthy man, not only

* One of the many terms the Scots derive from the French.

for one in his way but in any way. One of his wife's miseries was, that she never could ascertain the actual amount of Mark's fortune.

Philosophers have said, that human beings change completely in seven years; but in eight, though Mrs. Mark Luke was considerably a different woman, she was not become wholly new. In nine cases out of ten, wives are always *genteeler* and have more *taste* than their husbands. Where the reverse holds, we have generally remarked, that that is an uncomfortable household. Mr. Luke's family followed the general rule. His lady always more ambitious, more refined, more every thing, was at the end of ten years become prodigiously more genteel, though she was no longer either quite so good-looking or half so good-humoured. The gradual process of refinement had been carried on chiefly at the small watering-places which she frequented. The history of these summer lodgings, and the society into which they threw Mrs. Mark Luke, had we time to pursue it, would completely show the several stages of the progress and polishing of manners among Exclusives in the West. There was, first, the bedroom at Gourock, where the neighbourhood was vulgar; next, the parlour with the bed thrust out of sight into a dark closet, at Roseneath—decidedly the more genteel; next, the airy lodging, of two or three apartments at Rothesay; and lastly ——but we have not yet got to Largs.

The most remarkable incidents of these years, were the birth of Marjory Robina; a scandalous story about the purloining of a London-made baby's frock, by an English servant of Mrs. Duncan Smith's, the dismissal of the girl, and her reception in the family of Mrs. Luke; and the death of that lady's brother in St. Kitt's, of a second attack of the yellow fever, without a will, prodigiously rich, no doubt of it, and his sister his only heir. His affairs were, however, "in great confusion;" and Mr. Mark Luke thought within himself that Mrs. Mark Luke assumed fully more consequence from the St. Kitt's fortune than was needful, until the assets were forthcoming. But she was not the less Mrs. Mark Luke, and the mother of Mysie, who was become, at five years old, the very apple of Mark's eye. Her white cheeks now powerfully enforced her mother's annual pleading for the bracing air of Largs, instead of that of Glasgow, or even of Gourock, or Dunoon, or any other spot she had ever visited before, in quest of health. For why? The Smiths had already been two years at Largs, with several other genteel Glasgow families; and the old haunts were evidently falling into comparative neglect and disrepute. Mr. Luke, as we have intimated, dearly loved little Mysie; and the child being, as we have said, only five years old, and not having yet discovered how essentially vulgar her father and his calling were, loved him in return, without abatement of affection, either on account of groceries, china, or common crockery, a profitable new branch which Mark had commenced, in spite of the angry pleading of his lady, for whom it had obtained the cognomen of the Pigwife among the Smiths, and all the lodgers and bathers in rank "above her."

Mark, moreover, loved a quiet life—quiet, but busy—grudging even the few hours which his hebdomadal visit to the coast, kept him out of the shop on a Monday morning after the regular hour of opening.

This state of things brings us to the spring and hot summer of 1816; which saw Mark a Bank Director in Ordinary, and Mrs. Mark Luke and her daughter, and confidential maid-servant—she who stole the frock, or rather the pattern—set down in a lodging at Largs, and in hourly view of the "Beautiful, lately finished Marine Villa of Halcyon Bank." So it was described in the advertisements, with its "splendid sea-views, and well-stocked garden; fruit-trees and bushes in full bearing; three-stall stable, and gig-house; fitted up with hot and cold baths—catacomb wine cellar, and a conservatory finished to the glazing." How often on rainy days did Mrs. Mark Luke sigh, and look,—peruse that advertisement, and sigh again!

The proprietor and late occupier of Halcyon Bank, was a West Indian planter, who had gone to Demerara at eighteen, as a book-keeper without a groat, and returned, at forty-five, half *ruined* by the fall of colonial produce, to build Halcyon Bank, and lay out its grounds.

In his first fever of constructiveness, this *ruined* man had spared no pains to complete and accomplish the marine villa, at all points, as a permanent residence for a man of fortune; but he calculated without his hostess, a mistake as dangerous as reckoning without the host. His best excuse was, that at this time he had no such woman with whom to reckon. Next summer, she was found in the person of a young lady from Edinburgh, then on a visit in Ayrshire; and in 1816, she had the pleasure of withdrawing him to a more

"eligible neighbourhood." Halcyon Bank, though far from perfect as a residence, — for it had but one drawing-room, and that only twenty-eight feet by nineteen, — would have been endurable to Mrs. Gengebre, though accustomed all her life to a suite of "reception rooms," save for the society,—the horrid society of the West!

Mrs. Gengebre could not decide which class of the West-country people was the most odious,— the molasses and rum, or the muslin and twist Magnificoes, who looked as if they despised Demerara fortunes of £55,000, even when administered by the daughter of an Edinburgh advocate—or the Glasgow and Paisley *shopocracy*, and small-fry manufacturers, who, every season, rushed, in all their finery, down upon the sea-coast and into the water, as if bit by mad dogs; jostling, elbowing, and galling the kibes of their betters. There was positively no enduring them, and no keeping them off.

In vain, indeed, had the *Exclusives* retreated, year after year, before the spreading shoals of the Huns, who, unlike the herrings which lead the bottle-nose whales and porpoises round the lochs and bays, are always led by the great fish. From Roseneath the *comme-il-faut* squadron had been beaten back to Helensburgh. Hence they retreated, in good order, to Rothesay; but the enemy advanced by steam. Largs was no sanctuary; Arran itself no refuge at last; and still the spring note following that of the cuckoo, was, "They come."

"Jura would prove no hiding place,"— so prophesied Mrs. Gengebre; and if respectable people fled to St. Kilda itself, thither, she was morally certain, the ambitious and restless *canaille* would bend their sails.

"But what the worse are we?" said Mr. Gengebre, for the fiftieth time. Mrs. Gengebre had one unfailing argument, and but one, suited to her husband's understanding, in the present reduced state of colonial produce.

"The worse, Mr. Gengebre! Do you not see, sir, how these hordes enhance the price of every commodity requisite in a family. Butter is a penny a-pound dearer than last year; poultry, — but there is, indeed, no buying it: to retain our plain, quiet style of living and dressing in this neighbourhood, is out of the question. In short, Mr. Gengebre, *we cannot afford it.*"

Mr. Gengebre was much struck with the sudden prudence of his wife. "It was not," her female cousin who came from Edinburgh to assist in the removal, said — "it was not to be planted among such a set, that Anne Lennox had sacrificed her youth, beauty, and accomplishments to that yellow-brown elderly gentleman,—not to be *planted* among off-sets of sugar canes and cotton stalks, far away from the refined and polite society to which she had always been accustomed."

The summer of 1816 witnessed, accordingly, one of those connected changes perpetually going on in society. In that season Mr. and Mrs. Bethel set off from the Marine Parade, Brighton, for a tour and residence of some duration in Rhenish Germany; Mr. and Mrs. Winram, in the same week, left their villa at Inveresk, Musselburgh, and arrived in due time in the Marine Parade, Brighton; and the proprietors of Halcyon Bank were so fortunate as to obtain that "capital mansion" which the Winrams had deserted, and that, they were assured, in the face of ten other applicants.

The changes did not stop here. James Howison, foreman to Walkinshaws and Walkinshaw, Glasgow, entered the small house lately inhabited by Mr. Robert Furnishins, tailor; who took possession, at Whitsunday, of "that comfortable, airy, roomy, first-flat, consisting of dining-room, parlour, three bed-rooms, cellar in the area, and right to the common green, — the whole as lately occupied by Mark Luke, *Esquire!*"

Though Mrs. Mark Luke thought it was taking a very great liberty to *harl* their name through the papers in connexion with a *flat* in the Trongate, there was consolation in the *Esquire*. Meanwhile, our chain is not complete in all its links; for Mrs. Mark Luke had not yet attained the now tenantless terrestrial Paradise of Halcyon Bank, the ultimate point of her inhabitive ambition. But she had taken up a position, sat down in front of it, and, in military phrase, masked it. Mr. Mark Luke had been contented, on his frugal wife's suggestion, of saving a half-year's rent, to pack away his furniture in his warehouse; and Mrs. Mark Luke vowed in her secret heart that she should never return to Glasgow, to any place less dignified than a Square; or, at all events, a street-door and "a house within itself."

What were the motives and consequences of these connected movements? Mr. and Mrs. Bethel of Bethel's Court saw that they *must* retrench; but carrying London and Brighton habits along with them, they also found that retrenchment was not so easy of accomplishment, even in cheap Rhenish Ger-

many,—and were discontented, as a matter of course. The Winrams had gone to Brighton, to be "more in the way of their friends,"—that is, of those who could help them to appointments for their sons, and establishments for their daughters,—and found themselves as much out of the way of such friends as ever. The late mistress of Halcyon Bank was satisfied for a time, as she "had got back to the world." But the tailor who had taken possession of the late domicile of Mrs. Mark Luke, was charmed with so capital a situation for business; and the large small family of the Walkinshaws' foreman were perfectly transported with the additional elbow-room, of one more closet for two more children and a wife's mother. The Furnishins alone thoroughly enjoyed their removal and new situation.

For a time our heroine, Mrs. Mark Luke, was tolerably satisfied with her genteel lodging, and with gazing at the ticket among the hollies of Halycon Bank, and wondering when that St. Kitt's attorney would make such a remittance as might enable her to lay the subject before Mark with effect.

The first Sunday he came down, she led him that way, as they took their evening walk *en famille*. The green peas they had at dinner were bought from the person who had charge of the house,—"Not a worm in them," Mrs. Mark Luke remarked; "the garden certainly was productive, the advertisement told no lie in that; and the flowers were so fresh and luxuriant. How could that fine Edinburgh lady, Mrs. Gengebre, leave such a paradise?"

"There's a worm in every mortal thing, my doo," moralized Mark; "Ye see Halycon Bank and all its beauties could not content the craving heart of Mrs. Gengebre, poor woman.

Man never is, but always to be blest,—Baby."

"Huts, tuts, that's true in a sense, Mr. Luke, and very proper Sabbath night's discourse it is; but she who was not content with this gem for a summer-place must be an unreasonable woman."

June, July, and August passed, and still the ticket shone among the green hollies,—and still the Luke family, by tacit consent, directed their steps thitherward. Mr. Mark Luke would now affectionately lift up little Mysie to have a peep through the sweet-brier and privet hedges flourishing within the railings, while the exclamatory admiration of this the

Sole daughter of his house and heart,

enhanced every charm to her admiring parent.

"You would be a good girl and learn your *First Book* well, if papa would take you to live in that braw, bonny house, Mysie, dear?" said sly Mrs. Mark Luke, who, years afterwards, wont to remark that, from the first sight of the ticket, it was borne in on her mind that she was to live in Halycon Bank. It was somehow—she could not tell how—but so it was. The presentiment, in our opinion, denoted, at least, the foregone conclusion of worrying or *concussing* Mr. Mark Luke into the purchase of the marine villa, which she was astonished to see so overlooked in the market. But nobody could know of it.

The nights of October now looked rousingly in the illuminated Trongate. The apothecary's windows flamed ruby, emerald, and sapphire; Mr. Furnishins' work-shop, with its three windows, looked like one huge gas-lamp, and Mrs. Mark Luke, in the early part of the month, obtained a town dwelling, with that great object of her ambition, a *Main Door*—of which the dignity, nicely appreciated on the local scale of gentility, migh be reckoned about two and a half degrees in better fashion than her abandoned "capital first flat." Settled here, she selected some new carpets, and *cut* some old acquaintances; and issued a household edict, that, from that day, on pain of the housemaid's instant dismissal, little Mysie was to be styled "Miss Luke."

At the house-warming Mark saw few of the old familiar faces, nor were the new what his wife entirely approved,—but they were, at least, as much in advance of the old set, as was her house. Great ladies have an uncommon advantage over such votaries of fashion as our Mrs. Mark Luke. All their *nobodies* were to her *somebodies*, in spite of herself; and very troublesome *somebodies*, too. Kindred by blood and marriage it was impossible, with Scottish prejudices and customs, to get easily rid of; and though she readily perceived, that not to be *excluded*, she must first become rigidly *exclusive* herself, this was not all at once so easily accomplished.

Mrs. Mark Luke was, indeed, become a woman of many sorrows. There was no stopping the tongues of Penny Parlane and Betty Bogle, even when she admitted them to her tea-parties—and it was much worse when they were excluded; nor yet of deprecating the contempt of the Smiths. It was

hard for her, as she told her confidential maid, "to say whether her own relations or Mark's were the most troublesome and intrusive, — now that she, the mother of an only girl, of considerable expectations, found it necessary, in duty to her child, to move in a different sphere. It was so very impertinent and provoking in the Sprot girls, Mark's Saltcoat nieces, to come up to Glasgow, when, though obliged to ask them, they might have known she did not want them; and then to be *aunty-auntying* at her at the Bairns' Ball, even while Mrs. Dr. Wilson was politely talking to her, and while Master James was waltzing with Miss Luke."

But the winter campaign was as yet scarce opened. It at first promised fair, though the demon of small ambitions, — he whose name, verily, is Legion, was about to play his scurvy tricks, as usual, to Mrs. Mark Luke. In the first years of her married life, the Rev. Dr. —— was at the height of his vogue as a preacher, and it was about as difficult to obtain a *good* pew in his church in Glasgow, as a *good* box at the Italian Opera House, in London, in a very full season; and equally the subject of anxiety and ambition to *Exclusives*. Mrs. Mark Luke had sat for some years under a gallery where her well furbelowed pelisses, and, undeniably, Edinburgh bonnets, were seen to little advantage. From this eclipse she had, in three years, wriggled forward only two pews. She could not *hear*, she told Mr. Luke, where she sat, — she should have said she could not see, nor be seen. The Luke name had been on the vacant seat list for all that time; and it was exceedingly provoking not to get a proper seat. It was so pleasant, too, to have a place for a stranger.

"You are lady of your wish at last, goodwife," said Mark, as he came into dinner one day, in a peculiarly bright humour.

"Ye have bought it!" exclaimed Mrs. Mark Luke, her eyes sparkling with pleasure. Mark understood this well:—"Halcyon Bank."

"You have the seats, goodwife."

"In the Smiths' pew?" Mr. Mark Luke nodded affirmatively. "The whole pew, Mr. Luke?" Now Mrs. Mark Luke did not wish for the whole — she wanted genteel companionship.

"Only two seats, near the pulpit, for my mother and you to hear. I can shift about: —or take the elders' seat when at the plate."

The arrangement did not exactly please. — Mark himself, even with all her pains, was far from being so polished in manners as Mrs. Mark Luke could have wished; but his ill-dressed vulgar old mother, in her brown bombazeens, who spoke so broad Glasgow? —— For the Smiths' sake she would not submit to putting such a pewmate upon them; but it would not do to be rash on this point. Mark had his pride too.

The places in this most enviable pew had been those of a widow lady and her daughter, who had neglected to secure them in time; and "first come first served," was the free-trade maxim of Mark Luke.

"Mrs. John Smith and Miss Bella should have taken their seats before they gaed to the Troon," said he.

"Went to Ardrossan, Mr. Luke, my dear. You know how anxious I am that Miss Luke acquire, from the first, a correct pronunciation, and that no improper word reach her ear; — for what do I give such wages to the English girl we obtained from Mrs. Smith's family — five pounds in the half year?"

"Ardrossan be it, goodwife; and bid the English lass with the *burr*, bring ben the hotch-potch, for I'm in a hurry to-day."

"Hodge-podge, Mr. Luke!"

"Hocus-pocus if ye like, Mrs. Luke, only let us have dinner; — I'm in haste and pressed with a power of orders from Cumnock and Kilmarnock, and the shop standing to the door full of carriers."

So pleasant to the ears of Mrs. Mark Luke was it to hear of a *power* of orders, that *polished* as she always was, and *purist* as she was lately become, she constrained herself to overlook any vulgarity of language and pronunciation at this time, and to hasten dinner. She was also absorbed by the new church-seats. In the course of the summer she had frequently seen at Largs, her haughty and unconscious future pew-fellows, the Exclusive Smiths. "Mighty gentry to be sure they were, though Miss Penny Parlane's father remembered old Smith, a broken farmer in the parish of Delap; and it was still known to thousands in Glasgow, that Smith himself had been a clerk to the Watertwists for many a year, at £60; ay, and had *helped himself* well, too, or report wronged him." But all this previous knowledge did not now make Mrs. Mark Luke one whit less anxious about her first appearance in their pew. She resolved to be, and to look as unconscious as possible — to be neither too haughty nor too humble in her bearing; and to shape her course by circumstances. She, moreover, reserved her new winter pelisse and bonnet,

with those of Mysie, for the first Sunday on which the Smiths could be expected.

It must be understood that the Smiths were a family of the first distinction. Their mother was an "East-country lady," — *i. e.* the daughter of an Edinburgh writer, — and their connexions were all either *East-country* people, or *West India* people. The son was training for the Scottish bar: — Was it in the Fates that the skirt of his black gown might yet be extended over the naked family-tree of Mark Luke, and cover the defects of Miss Mysie's birth?

The daughters had been educated by their mother's particular friend, the Madame Campan of the West, whose seminary for young ladies flourished somewhere about the Sauchie Hall Road.

It is to us quite wonderful, how, by hook or by crook, Mrs. Mark Luke contrived to make herself so thoroughly acquainted with the proceedings, and, indeed, whole internal economy of the Smith family, for as well as they kept her, as Miss Parlane said, at the staff's end. She knew that on the Saturday preceding the Sunday, on which she was to put on her new bonnet, they had a dinner party, and turtle! and that instead of sherry wine, as in other genteel families, Glasgow punch, styled simply *punch*, was used at table, as something infinitely more fashionable and *recherché*, and which, of course, she would have at her next dinner. But poor Mrs. Mark Luke, clever as she was, did not know that, *minus* the turtle, the punch was out of place and thoroughly vulgar. She had much to learn; and, indeed, in fashionable life, it is *live and learn*, so rapid are the shadowy transitions. Never, however, was there a more apt and willing scholar than our Mrs. Mark Luke.

Among the guests of the Smiths on that day, were, as Mrs. Mark Luke understood, a young advocate from Edinburgh, who, though he had not much to do at the assizes, might probably have still less to call him home; and a Liverpool merchant of the breed of the Medici, an Exquisite of the counting-house, equally a judge of dry goods and the Fine Arts. Both were desirable men enough in their respective places, though Miss Smith inclined to the cultivated merchant, and Miss Maria admired the literary barrister. Both were most flattered and most happy to be permitted to attend the ladies to church next morning; and on Saturday night at twelve precisely Maria closed her piano, while Miss Smith "pledged her honour the gentlemen would receive one of the richest intellectual treats they had ever enjoyed, in hearing the Doctor. Seats were scarcely to be obtained; but there was always room, in papa's pew, for friends, who knew how to appreciate eloquence: you know, Maria, Aunt John and Bella can shift about among the Lukes for a day."

"Oh, that Mrs. Mark Luke will be the death of me!" exclaimed Maria, laughing. "I met her this morning — coming from her marketing, I dare say, poor thing; and such a set-out! — a black velvet mantle, for all the world like a saulie's cloak, at a funeral."

"These are the ugly things the fashionable women wear in London this season," said the travelled merchant, in his ignorance and wish to please. The young ladies exchanged looks—Maria coloured: was it possible that Mrs. Mark Luke had taken a leap beyond them, stolen a march, and forestalled them in fashionable costume?—So stood the melancholy fact. Money, talent, and activity, will do any thing.

The Smiths were too genteel a family to be tied down by kirk-going bells. Independently of the little fuss and bustle which attended all their movements, it was impossible to get that lazy rascal Bob out of bed, or Maria dressed in time; but they generally took their places very soon after the service had commenced. The Lukes, from Mark's love of punctuality, were still an unfashionably early family.

On this eventful morning, Miss Smith was conducted up the passage of the kirk by the Liverpool exquisite, and Miss Maria by the young Edinburgh barrister, while Mr. Smith followed his portly lady: Bob, "the rascal," was probably still brushing his moustaches at home. Miss Smith, at the pew-door, first paused, to give place to her mother,—for at the *Belle Retiro* Establishment etiquette had been most rigidly enforced—paused, we have said, and then first turned her eyes upon the family pew.

O gods, and goddesses, sylphs, gnomes, nixies, pixies, fays, nymphs, brownies, mermaidens, and water-kelpies! Spirits of earth, water, air, or of whatsoever element ye be, to whose charge is committed such mighty mortal distinctions as refining sugar by the hogshead, or selling it out by the *cwt.* or *lb.*, imagine the confusion of this injured household, and judge and revenge their cause upon the audacious head of Mrs. Mark Luke! — that vulgar woman! that grocer's wife! squatted at the head of papa's pew — her

flaming, fashionable silks spread out — her new gilt Bible on the desk — her rings, and jewelled watch, and brooches, a-many, glancing to the October sun: — And, oh, horror of horrors! her complacent simper of recognition and of lawful possession, cônfirmed by the polite start of Mr. Mark Luke, who rushed out to do the honours of the pew to Mrs. Duncan Smith, and to all the Smith ladies, without perceiving, or seeming in the least conscious of the dilemma in which they were placed by his wife's unimaginable audacity.

Here indeed was a shock for a Scottish Christian family to sustain upon a Sabbath morning—no warning given!

Miss Smith vowed in her secret heart, that if her father had the spirit of a — flea, — (she was only thinking, you know — not for the world would she have uttered the shocking word,) — the whole family would next week become Episcopalians, and for ever abandon a religious community where they had been so monstrously used:—"There was, besides, a much genteeler congregation in the Chapel. She had long wished for an opportunity to break off decently from the Kirk,—the English service was so sublime, and the organ so beautiful!"

In the meanwhile, there was no help for the misadventure; and the Smith ladies condescended at last to sit down; Mr. Mark Luke, in the exuberance of his politeness, taking his place edge-ways upon four inches of sitting-room at the bottom of the bench. But this show of humility in nothing counterbalanced the insult and provocation given by his wife, *flaring up!* and maintaining her position with little Mysie at the head of the pew. She even had the effrontery, poor woman, in her simple ignorance, to point out to Miss Maria the psalm at which she was herself singing away unconsciously, during the time of the flurry, as if either psalms or prayers could at this time have concerned the agitated Miss Smith.

Haughtily reining her neck, and at the same time ludicrously dropping her mouth and eyes, Miss Maria exchanged looks with her indignant sister, while both at a glance seemed to make a rapid inventory and appraisement of Mrs. Mark Luke, and her entire set-out. That lady, whatever they might think, was not without quickness of observation, where her self-love was interested, nor yet without pride and resentment. She now tingled with indignation, — but shame was the quickly-succeeding feeling; for had she not been palpably detected in the vulgar practice of singing the psalm! Habit had been too powerful for fashion; just as when she still sometimes mispronounced a word, or used an expression of a kind which neither the delicate substitute of the Lord Chamberlain, nor the matron of the *Belle Retiro* Establishment could have sanctioned.

On perceiving her blunder, her naturally good voice died away to a faint quaver—

Fine by degrees, and beautifully less;

and her Paisley science was never again displayed within the walls of St. ———. It had been all very well to sing the psalm, while she sat with her old-fashioned mother-in-law, under the gallery. But now——

Upon the very same principle which Mrs. Mark Luke lost her voice, the Smiths ought to have recovered theirs,—for as she pushed forward they retreated.

Mr. Smith would not that week consent to become an Episcopalian, ill as he allowed his wife and daughters had been used; and the Miss Smiths were consequently compelled to delay their conversion to the genteeler religion until they should marry; an event which Maria thought could not be very far off now. He was, however, prevailed with to sanction the exchange of places in church then negotiating between his wife and the family tailor.

Here was diamond cut diamond for Mrs. Mark Luke! Even the oldest and the most sand-blind, and high-gravel blind of the crones early gathered on the pulpit stairs, (afterwards rousted out, by the way, as a vulgar feature,) noticed the new crimson-covered seat, next the door, on which a boy in the Smith livery had early mounted guard; and in ten minutes afterwards, while all the bells of Glasgow were ringing out, up the passage marched Mr. Furnishins the tailor, and his wife, and Mr. Brown the dyer, and his wife, following rank and file in the wake or trough of Mrs. Mark Luke's new amber-coloured pelisse, and of her streamers, regarded as the broad pennant of their new pew! Composedly they took their places by her side,—first Mrs. Furnishins, then Mrs. Brown!

She saw, she felt that she was betrayed, insulted, lost! To make the matter worse, she could not pretend to deny but that Furnishins was a genteel tailor. Did he not make for the Smiths, for her own husband, and the best in Glasgow,—occupy her late flat, and send his family to Helensburgh in summer?

But the dyer! — he was merely one of old

gowns and shawls, not of webs and whole pieces; a man who dipped his own self,—and who, accordingly, came to church on Sunday with fingers of all hues—blue, green, and purple—as if fresh out of the vat. Could the man not wear mittens?

The case of the Smiths had been sufficiently deplorable; but, was ever kirk-going Christian matron so afflicted about church matters as Mrs. Mark Luke? Even those of her sympathizing fellow-Christians who railed the loudest at the arrogance of the Smiths, thus openly displayed in the face of the whole congregation, could not wholly forbear a sly joke at the mortified appearance of the lady, who in her place of state, at the head of her new pew, looked as if placed on a seat of distinction, now generally, we believe, fallen into desuetude in Lowland churches; anciently yclept the Black Stool of Repentance.

There was not even her respectable old mother-in-law to keep her in countenance. She had manœuvred that the old lady should, of her own accord, express a desire to return to "sit under" worthy, drowsy, droning Dr. ——, whose "style of language" she said, "she comprehended better than the flory flights of that young Doctor, who had turned all the leddies' heads."

Even this old lady resented the insult offered to her offspring, and the bile of Mark was for the first time fairly heated and stirred in his wife's quarrels. The insolent conduct of the Smiths would, indeed, every one assured him, have provoked a saint. Nothing else was talked of for that week in Glasgow,—or, at least, in the loquacious circles of Mrs. Mark Luke, and Miss Penny Parlane, who generously made up a feud with her friend Mrs. Luke, of some months' standing, and gave tongue loudly against the Smiths, wherever she went.

How was Mrs. Mark Luke ever again to appear in church?—that was the question. If the Smiths meditated Lutheranism, she ruminated as deeply on becoming a Seceder. Some very genteel meeting-houses had lately been built in Glasgow, and were filled by very well-dressed congregations. To this Mark steadily opposed his veto; and indeed Mrs. Mark Luke could not, on many accounts, have seriously thought of so retrograde a movement; the Seceders or Voluntaries being decidedly as much below par, as the English Chapel was above it.

On the first Sunday it luckily rained "cats and dogs." No lady could stir out that day, even in a *noddy*. On the next, Mrs. Mark Luke pleaded a gum-boil and swelled face; so the tailor and dyer and their ladies remained undisturbed in possession for her. Mrs. Mark Luke had never been three successive Sundays out of church in her life; so upon the third Sunday, some returning sense of duty, and partly, perhaps, some small longing to see what new faces, cloaks, and bonnets were abroad, prevailed over the still rankling feelings of wounded, irritated pride. It may be all very easy for those ladies who have parties, and *soirees*, and concerts, and plays, and operas to attend, to avoid the church; but our Mrs. Mark Luke was none of those. There was not at that time so much as an occasional lecture upon Temperance, Phrenology, or Negro Slavery, to beguile the tedium of the week. So she went to church; and on that day the "dear, young Doctor" happened to choose for his text those words.

"*Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*"

Dr. Chalmers himself could not have handled the subject better. Mrs. Luke saw it was meant for a palpable hit. The tail of Miss Betty Bogle's eye, pointed as plainly at a certain crimson-covered back seat as a lady's eye with a slight *skelly* could well point.

Mrs. Mark Luke vowed in her secret mind to call upon the Doctor's lady to-morrow, and sound her as to whether a new gown of best Prince's stuff, to cost £25, or a silver tea-pot, as a present from the ladies of the congregation, would be the most acceptable tribute to the Doctor's eloquence.

Even Mr. Mark Luke himself noticed the close *practical* application of the text; and at the end of the service, so deeply impressed was Mrs. Mark with the discourse, that she nodded condescendingly to Mrs. Dyer Brown, and whispered an inquiry about her baby and the measles; and spoke of a pot of currant jelly to be sent to-morrow.

Ye gods and goddesses! we were but a few pages back invoking you to avenge the injury offered to the illustrious house of Smith, by what Mark Luke most vulgarly and profanely called "two bottom-rooms" being granted to him and his wife in the Smiths' pew, in a Presbyterian Kirk! Is it of you, or of what other delicate, tricksy, humorous, laughing sprites, that we should now inquire,—how it rejoiced the reins—so to speak—of your incorporeal natures, to witness the kindly gracious humanity, the great humility,

of Mrs. Mark Luke, when she thus condescended to address her neighbour the dyer's wife in open church?

If "the dear Doctor" had hitherto been considered the first of priests by the ladies, he soon became to Mrs. Mark Luke, the greatest of prophets. But that will appear in order.

Fairly set down in her new house and her new pew, and the first dreadful rebuff surmounted, Mrs. Mark Luke, during this winter, worked double tides in making up lost way in the difficult navigation of gentility. She laid her plans well; she gave excellent dinners, and did not turn her company out of doors before a second dinner appeared at her command, under the name of supper. This was an improvement upon the *Exclusive*, or "East-Country Hunger-'em-out" system, introduced by Mrs. Smith, and as such it propitiated convivial guests of the old school. To be sure, only the town's people, as the Smiths truly said, visited the Pig-wife; and even some of the young super-refined Edinburghers, and Greenockians, and men of Liverpool, were deceitful enough to say in *Exclusive* circles, that they went to Mrs. Mark Luke's dinners merely for the fun of the thing; while those good easy souls, who liked good feeding and easy sociality, and did not much care for Rossini's music or *Exclusivism*, asserted with more truth, that no dinners could be really better in themselves, or more perfectly appointed than those given by Mrs. Luke; no house was better furnished than hers, no lady better dressed, nor hostess more attentive and obliging in her manners.

"A little *empressement* might be noted," remarked Mr. Ewins, a great authority in such matters,—for he had travelled with a young nobleman, and had been at Hamburg, Leipsic, and Paris, and he had dined at Hamilton Palace, and with the *Member;* "but urgent hospitality is almost a virtue or a grace in a Scottish landlady!" he added.

. This was said in the hearing of a select *Exclusive* Smith party; and he, or rather *she*, our poor Mrs. Mark Luke, and her entertainments were not to be so easily let off.

"Was it you, Mr. Ewins," cried Miss Maria, with her charming vivacity of manner, "that Mrs. Luke insisted upon tasting the soles she had got *per coach*, from Aberdeen, at £1, 2s. cost, after she had gorged you with Highland mutton?"

"What we call her *sole*-cism," said Bob the wit. "And did she not insist upon you swallowing a glass of raw old rum instead of a little brandy,—raw rum,—as your liqueur after your fish," added he, laughing aloud.

Either the taste, or good-nature, or both, of Mrs. Luke's guest of yesterday, were piqued by this impertinence. Besides, it in truth defied him, "a travelled gentleman," to perceive any shade of difference between the Luke and the Smith *style*, save, that with the former, there was really less pretension; and that Mrs. Luke's affectation of refinement was less troublesome and obtrusive.

"I am sorry, for the sake of the ladies," he replied, "that I cannot charge my memory with the exact order in which I ate my dinner yesterday. I rather think, however, Mrs. Luke observes the established order of Glasgow in the succession of her dishes. Soles, or any sort of fish, in the second course, would, no doubt, be supreme *bon ton* in Paris, at Petersburgh, or Vienna.—I do not know if Mrs. Luke has yet got so far a-head of her own city in the march of refinement. And as for *rum*, my friend Robert cannot surely have been so much in Paris without learning that *veritable Martinique* is considered as much superior to brandy at a French table, as among us brandy is to Kilbagie."

This was a damper,—a wet blanket,—a slap in the face. The champion, however, did his lady no permanent good. If it were so that fish and rum were ordered thus in France, which they doubted, it was not the less a vulgar practice in Glasgow; and at best, Mrs. Mark Luke had but blundered upon the higher style.

Mrs. Mark Luke's increased activity in competition, and the affair of the pew, had now changed contempt into persecution. She might advance with the lovers of good dinners, but the *Exclusive* ladies, even of those who ate them, still held her aloof.

Poor woman! often when meaning to confer a kindness she did incalculable mischief. A new pattern of a cap or shawl border which she might purchase, perhaps, only to encourage a young beginner, was immediately vulgarized, and the sale ruined by the adoption of the article by Mrs. Mark Luke. Any thing beautiful or novel which she, in her indefatigable activity, obtained and wore first, was forthwith christened a LUKE, and so proscribed. Her name liberally set down for six copies, ruined the hopes of a young poet then publishing by subscription. No *Exclusive* lady would for a long time send her daughter to the new drawing-master, or music-master, to which Mysie Luke had been sent, however eminent the

stranger might be in his art. Mysie's mother's name at the head of a list, or near it, almost knocked up, this winter, a Charity Concert and two balls. Tickets were certainly taken, but then *nobody* went,—that is to say, none but *nobodies* attended. It was enough, as Mrs. Smith said, "that they *paid* their money without *mixing promiscuously* with that set."

About the end of the season, Mrs. Mark Luke had been earnestly requested to patronize the benefit of a female player. Mrs. Mark Luke was a generous woman, as well as an ostentatious one. Her box, early taken, left half the others empty; and she was thus at the very last day compelled to beat up for play-goers, and send out such scouts as Miss Penny Parlane and Miss Bogle, to aid in distributing tickets, for which she paid, and to promise teas, far and wide. This single transaction threw her back months, as the crisis compelled her to seek support, by renewing old cast-off intimacies, and yielding, of necessity, to improper new alliances. The Furnishins and Browns were not, to be sure, taken into her own box, but it was undeniable that they were *in the boxes* upon the only night that she had graced the theatre with her presence.

Sick with so many chagrins, Mrs. Mark Luke longed for summer and the Largs; and, in the first fine days of spring, she set off in search of genteel summer lodgings. Now, what lodgings could possibly be so genteel as those which had been rented for two years by the Smiths? Mark Luke might fancy them too expensive; but there was the St. Kitts' remittances certainly coming with the next fleet, and upon the faith of this, inquiry was instituted.

Was ever professional landlady, with a lodging upon her hands, so cold and dry in manner, and so reluctant to admit inspectors, as this Largs one? Mrs. Girvan drawled out that "She was not quite sure yet, what she was to do about her *hoos*." She was not even sure if it was to let at all, or if she was not actually in terms about it already." She accordingly followed rather than led the bold intruder into her dining-room. There stood the very sofa on which Madam Smith had sat in state last summer; there hung the muslin draperies from behind which Miss Maria had "cut her capers," and Miss Smith cast her haughty airs upon Mrs. Mark Luke and her little daughter, as they went full-fig to the evening promenade. She would at this moment have given triple rent for the lodging, of which the tenantless or tenantable condition appeared so dubious to the landlady. An idea suddenly struck the applicant,—Was the woman afraid of her payment?

"You surely do not remember me, ma'am," said Mrs. Mark Luke, with a simpering consciousness of being as *good* as the bank.

Mrs. Girvan could not plead ignorance.

"I know you well enough, mem—ye wont to pass this way often enough last season:—ye are Mrs. Luke, the grocer's wife in the Trongate; and I'm not just sure that I'm free to set my hoos."

"Mrs. Luke, the grocer's wife in the Trongate!"—it sounded harshly on the delicate auricular nerve of our Mrs. Mark Luke. Had she then no higher *status*—no independent existence, even with the St. Kitts' fortune? She evacuated the lodging in sulky silence, and strayed towards the still empty, unsold Halcyon Bank; while the landlady, now finding her tongue, lost as little time as possible in informing her gossips, how loath she had been to set off Mrs. Luke; for Mark Luke's siller was as sure as Johnny Carrick's; but she had no choice, as it would ruin the character of her house for ever, if she took in the Pig-wife. Her ignorance on such points had cost her enough before.

In inadvertently receiving the Smiths themselves, she had for ever forfeited all hope of getting back the Dempsters, "who were a cut aboon the Smiths, in spite of all their airs and pride, and cousins of Mrs. Gengebre's of the Bank, (Halcyon Bank, to wit,) who was a *real* lady." False woman!—had she not given those same Smiths reason to believe she thought them the greatest people on Westland ground; and, to their faces, sneered at the pride and poverty of the East country gentles, of the writer tribe.

When Mrs. Luke returned home without having secured any lodging, she found her husband in a humour which, for the first time, fairly threw him within her sphere of sympathies. Nor did she neglect to improve the circumstance. A piece of ground had recently been enclosed in Glasgow, for a new cemetery, which was to be sold out in small portions, and Mark, among his many purchases, had ambitioned that of a decent family *lair*, to which his father's bones might be lifted, and in which might soon be laid, first his mother, next Mrs. Mark Luke, and then himself—Mysie and her posterity following, to the latest generations.

Why Mark imagined that his wife, ten

years younger than himself, was to tenant the Luke family *lair*, and have her virtues recorded on its marble head-stone, before himself, we cannot tell, save that matrimonial longevity seems a privilege of the nobler sex.

The burying ground for sale was laid out and divided. Mark studied the ground-plan, which was submitted to him before any places were sold, or many bespoken, and he fixed upon his own, with the approbation of his wife. It was horribly dear, he owned; but in a respectable *juste milieu* situation, among the illustrious dead of the Barony parish; dry, neither too large nor too small, too backward nor too forward; and great was Mark's indignation when he was informed by one of the Trustees that, notwithstanding the earliness of his application, and the extent of his wealth and credit, there was no place for him and his among the defunct *Exclusives* of his native city. Smith himself, ay, and Dempster, had quashed his claim at once:—no *lady* had a hand in this. As Trustees for the new ground, these gentlemen alleged that it was their duty to reject such applications as might deter respectable persons from coming forward. "The Walkinshaws are in terms," said Mr. Smith; "but if they hear that such people as Mark Luke are applying, the speculation is ruined:—no one *will* or *can* purchase after him."

Was ever so ill-starred a family as the Lukes! Excluded in church-pews, excluded in summer-lodgings, excluded in a burial-ground!

It was some slight atonement or consolation that, when Mrs. Mark Luke next read in the *Chronicle*, "*Upset price still farther reduced.* That charmingly situated and most desirable Marine Villa," &c. &c.—there followed in the Bankrupt list—lo! and behold!—it was no mistake:—"Meeting of the creditors of Duncan Smith, merchant, to be held in the Tontine, &c. &c. for the purpose of appointing an interim factor."

Mrs. Mark Luke instantly ordered her clogs, to return a call from Miss Penny Parlane,—a visit long past due.

"Me never to hear a word of this!—but I hear nothing that goes on in Glasgow."

"And Mr. Luke's to be Trustee on the sequestrated estate.—It's no possible, but ye must have heard?" said Penny.

"Well, if I did, Miss Penny, it was but prudence—seeing how Mr. Luke stood in relation to the unhappy case—to say little.—Here is a downcome!"

"Ay, mem!—You remember that great discourse of the Doctor's upon the words, 'Pride goeth before destruction?'"

"The Doctor is great upon every subject," said Mrs. Mark Luke, somewhat statelily; and she took her leave, perceiving that she had a better clew for information than even that which Miss Penny was able to afford. Mark, too, to cheat her so, and keep his thumb upon all this!

To do our heroine justice, she was not, considering the many provocations she had received, at all vindictive; and though Mark, besides being *factor*, was himself a large creditor, she did not press her belief, which she could indeed have established by the evidence of her confidential English maid, the lass with the *burr*,—that the Smiths had a great many more silver spoons and forks, and much more napery than appeared in the inventory. There were, in particular, a silver tray and a vase and *corners*.

Mark himself acted with humanity and fairness; nor did Mrs. Mark Luke next year canvass against the appointment of Mr. Smith as agent to some Insurance company, in which she could now certainly have baffled him. She did not even insult the fallen greatness of the family by pressing her services and society upon them. N.B.—While the first meeting of creditors was being held, a letter arrived by the carrier to Mark, ordering some tea and sugar; and announcing, "that Mrs. Luke might now have Mrs. Girvan's lodgings," but Mrs. Luke was supplied!

Mr. Smith did not long hold his new situation. He died of what was called a broken heart; and the friends of the family, Mark Luke aiding and assisting, purchased for his widow and daughters the good-will of the Sauchie-Hall Road Establishment, from which the presiding lady was opportunely retiring to the higher latitude of Portobello, near Edinburgh.

While these arrangements were in progress, Mrs. Mark Luke's sympathies were deeply engaged for those "who had seen better days, and who were surely humble enough now." Humble they might be; but it now became a matter of calculation to be more rigidly and tenaciously exclusive than ever. This, Miss Smith said, was imperatively demanded by the first interests of the *Establishment*; which, as the sure way to success, opened with every thing either new, distant, or foreign; and, at least, as anti-Glasgow as possible.

In the mean while Mrs. Luke had the great good fortune to procure the reversion of a very clever upper-servant, or under-governess of the Smiths, discharged on the bankruptcy.

The English girl with the *burr*, engaged so long ago for the sake of the early purity of Miss Luke's accent, who was to lisp in English speech,

And drink from the well of English undefiled—

had been discharged as next thing to an impostor. She was only from Durham or thereabouts; and Robina, herself, had detected her mispronunciations and bad grammar; but Miss Dedham was a quite different style of person, and, indeed, in every way, an immense acquisition to Mrs. Luke and her daughter.

We have said that our heroine was an apt scholar; thus, she profited, though she was "too much the lady" to own that she either required or received any instruction in high-life and high-lived manners, from the adroit hints of her new companion; or from her descriptions of how such things were managed, by her direction, in her former family, and her former nursery and school-room.

Smollet pretends that in one month Peregrine Pickle qualified the gipsy girl he picked up under a hedge, to play her part as a young lady of breeding and education in polished society, which she accordingly performed, not only without detection, but with great *eclat*, till in an evil hour, the force of original habit burst through conventional usage, not yet become habitual and confirmed. We have ever held this story as a scurvy satire upon modern refinement; but certain it is, that with her own good natural parts, the tacit lessons of the clever governess, and those ever-ready ministers to the improvement in fashionable taste of ladies who have plenty of money—the milliners, namely, and the perfumers, and jewellers, and confectioners, and toy-dealers, and elocutionists, and lecturers—Mrs. Mark Luke had *genteelified* and absolutely refined more in one season, than in some half-a-dozen former years of stinted appliances, and with no one of sufficient authority to instruct her in the use of such as were proper.

Miss Ferrier, Captain Hamilton, and, above all, Mr. Theodore Hook, among the modern novelists, have exhausted themselves in ridicule of the blundering, clumsy, and ludicrous attempts of the would-be gentlefolks to imitate their betters; the impertinence of cits, *nouveaux riches*, and *parvenus*, and cockneys, who presume to converse and give musical parties and dinners like the highly-polished privileged orders. Even Miss Edgeworth has given one ambitious dinner, remarkable for entire and ludicrous failure: but then she has the discrimination to show, that the failure does not arise from any want of knowledge in the grocer's refined and ambitious lady, but solely from want of adequate means to accomplish her elegant hospitality. Lady Clonbrony has more vices of pronunciation, and is guilty of more breaches of conventional English manners, than the Dublin vulgarian; and while Lady Dashfort is as *brusque*, rude, and familiar as her high rank warrants, her maid is the very pink of formal, elaborate politeness. In this Miss Edgeworth shows her superiority to ordinary fictionists: she is aware that while Maria Louisa, the daughter of an Emperor, and the descendant of a line of Princes, born to the manner, if such may be, was simple to awkwardness, Josephine, the poor Creole, possessed all the refinement and elegance of manners which accomplishes an Exclusive *petite maitresse*.

Our own wonder and amusement have never been excited by the blunders of such pretenders as Mrs. Mark Luke, but rather by the truth, the *vraisemblance* of their imitation; and the absolute identity with great folks, in all exterior shows, which they were able to maintain and display after a very little experience. The ladies of the family of a rural esquire or laird, though of undisputable gentility of birth, will much oftener blunder in some part or other of costume, and in the last forms of etiquette, than the females of a respectable town tradesman. It has been remarked that the purest speakers of the English language in England, next to the highest class of nobility, are those shop-keepers and tradesmen in the west end of London, who associate with them daily in supplying their wants. The principle holds in many other points; and we think that the sketchers of *parvenu* manners should now rather direct their observation to how the proscribed castes pronounce their minds and accentuate their ideas, than to their *aa's* and *ee's;* or to how are *pronounced*, or exhibited, the few distinctions in their natural modes of thinking and feeling, between classes so far separated by external rank.

To return to our heroine. Mrs. Mark Luke tired of the tacit teaching of the accomplished Miss Dedham, and was pleased

to be rid of her, as "rather too clever;" and in the course of other two years, she formed quite another plan for Miss Luke than the original one of a home education.

She no longer required instruction in speaking English herself; for though she still occasionally blurted out a broad *aw*, when a delicate *a* was prescribed, and dealt largely in false emphasis, she began to feel returning confidence in herself, from Kean or O'Neil—we really forget which—having sanctified some of her supposed blunders, freely attacked by Miss Dedham. Besides, Mysie's English master, (the highest charger in Glasgow for private lessons,) had, in different words, decided against the governess; and, in short, she was civilly dismissed with handsome presents.

Miss Luke was now, in jockey phrase, rising eleven; and a plain, good-tempered, sensible child, who "took," it was said, after her father. Her mother's friends, and Miss Dedham, in particular, long affirmed that she *promised* to be a beauty; and Miss Betty Bogle, that *Lukie* would never keep her word. Even her own mother feared for Mysie's *beauty;* but she resolved that she should be highly *accomplished*, and never keep but the best company; in short—for it is nonsense to conceal it longer—that she should be *finished* off at the *Belle Retiro* Establishment.

Mr. Luke thought Mysie very pretty already, and to him her acquirements at eleven were quite wonderful—save in music. There Mark, who had a natural gift, felt that his heiress fell far short of her mamma; while Mrs. Luke herself, and Miss Dedham, affirmed just the contrary.—Miss Luke was wonderful in music, as in every thing else, for her years. Often had Mark given up his eyes to satisfy them, but he could not yield his ears. If Mysie's attempts were music, then was the female world of the West advancing backwards. His own family afforded an apt illustration. Before going to his apprenticeship he had been charmed by the old ballads of the

Free maids who wove their thread with bones,

in Hamilton; and with his old mother's song of "Saw ye my Father." Even the everlasting "Flower of Dumblane," and the "Whistle, and I'll come to ye," of his wife in their sprightly days of courtship, were, if not well sung, at least intelligible; and of Miss Peaston's five pieces on the piano, Mark could, at all events, recognize the "Legacy," and the "Woodpecker tapping;" but as to Mysie's melodious efforts upon the new Edinburgh instrument, and her pea-hen screechings!—mortifying as it was to him to own it, Mark fairly gave them up.

Rossini's music—and as probationer for the *Belle Retiro* Establishment, Miss Luke was, at this time, allowed to look at nothing else,—sounded to Mark Luke, grocer, exactly as it did to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, poet,—*like nonsense verses;* and for the same reason, which was, that their fashionable friends decided that neither had more ear than a post. Mark defied his wife's sentence, by proud reference to his own capitally sung Burns' songs, and Tannahill's to boot—as Coleridge might, by citing the exquisite harmony, the breathing music of his verses; but Mrs. Luke would have eluded this by the supplementary declaration,—"No ear for really good—that is for *fashionable* music, Mr. Luke."

Meanwhile the *Belle Retiro* Establishment was rising in reputation every day. It had been conducted from the first, Mrs. Luke assured her husband, with the greatest *tact:*—all the governesses were Swiss, the domestics English,—and they were held at such a distance!—Miss Maria herself was just returned from France. There was an impenetrable mystery in the management of the seminary, with "the strictest discipline, and the most rigid observance of etiquette."

Mrs. Mark Luke was willing to forget all early injuries and insults, for the sake of her daughter. "It was always allowed," she remarked, "that *Madame Mère*, which she understood was Mrs. Duncan Smith's style in the school, was quite the lady—too much so indeed, poor woman! in former days—but now this was of great advantage in forming the minds, and moulding the manners of young ladies! The *discipline*, Mrs. Luke understood, was so admirable, that every time she entered the school-rooms, every pupil, however engaged, rose, and dropt a low curtsy; then the regimen was so well regulated, and the young ladies were, from the practice of *Calisthenics*, so remarkable for their fine carriage! True, the terms were high; but then the pupils were so select, and Miss Maria was so accomplished, and Miss Smith so Intellectual!"

All this was poured into the unmusical ears of Mr. Luke with a rapidity which gave him no opportunity either for question or remark, much as he admired and wondered; and deeply as, on account of Mysie, he was interested.

As for Mrs. Smith, or "Madame Mère," he knew her of old to have been a senseless, proud, extravagant woman, who had ruined her husband, and brought up her children to be only too like herself. Miss Maria had been, whatever she now was, a saucy, satirical little cuttie; who had often laughed at his simple goodwife, in face of the whole kirk; and Miss Smith a vain, conceited fool. In this elementary way did Mark Luke silently reason upon these great characters. *Calisthenics*, he presumed, was some puppy of a French dancing master; and as to accomplishments, he surely understood them quite well, for his own wife had been accomplished, and Miss Betty Bogle had in her day been very accomplished,—many of his female friends were very accomplished, whom Mark thought useless *tawpies* for all that. But he nevertheless yielded to the necessity of his Mysie, when she had finished her English, and writing, and arithmetic, and geography, and dancing, being made *neibour-like* and accomplished—though he absolutely boggled at *intellectual*. Could Miss Smith preach like Dr. Chalmers, or lecture like Professor Sandford, or write politics and political economy, like the Editor of the *Glasgow Herald*:—and was she to impart all this intellectuality to his little Mysie? Allowing she were capable of imparting these goodly gifts—to which, however, Mark demurred,—he could not all at once perceive what the better his "wee Mysie" was to be for such rare and novel acquirements. Might they not prove a mote in the lassie's marriage?—Men—Mark now judged from experience—did not always like those marvellously clever speechifying ladies; so he puzzled on for another five minutes, and economically scraped his cheese, before he ventured to ask; "But what is *Intellectual*, goodwife? or what mean ye by it?"

"Huts, tuts, Mr. Luke, with your goodwifes—surely ye may leave that low epithet for Bailie Jervie's Mattie, and the Salt Market now;—and as for intellectual—every educated person, Mr. Luke, every individual among the educated classes, or of ordinary accomplishments, Mr. Luke—— Really I am ashamed of the inquiry:—and what signifies explaining about it? It is enough at present that Miss Luke becomes an inmate of the *Belle Retiro* Establishment."

Mr. Mark Luke emitted something between a consenting grunt, and a regretful sigh; but the matter, once fixed, he began, like a man of sense as he was, to view it on the bright side,—"His own Mysie *accomplished* and *intellectual*—but, above all, so near him as to come home every Saturday, though bred through the week with the daughters of the wealthiest merchants in the west of Scotland, forbye the Lennox and Argyle lairds. And good easy soul that she was! his consent made the goodwife so happy!"

Thus, at the worst, the affair presented many consolatory points; the Smiths would surely be kind to his bairn:—"They owed him a day in harvest from the date of his trustee-ship."

With what joyful alacrity did Mrs. Mark Luke proceed next morning to purchase the fashionable equipments of her daughter, whose embroidered trousers and silk hose were ordered upon a scale which might better have suited a grown-up young lady fitting out for the Bengal or Calcutta matrimonial bazaar, and pretty sure of an early market, than a little girl going to school! There were few genteel tea-tables in the Trongate where, in two days afterwards, the high destinies of Miss Luke were not known and discussed, and the vanity of her parents treated with proper reprobation; yet it is singular that the catastrophe which befell the ambitious Lukes, for we must call it by that imposing name, was not anticipated in a single quarter.

The last of the plain frocks and nightgowns of Robina, as her mother now chose to name her, were brought home; and as to the more conspicuous fashionable attire, there was good reason for delay. Her mamma reserved that till she had an opportunity of reconnoitring the dresses of the Sauchie Hall young ladies, and consulting, as she would then be well entitled to do, with Miss Maria; whose sojourn in France entitled her to preside, and pronounce in all affairs of the toilet.

There were indeed in certain Glasgow *coteries*, whispers of some mysterious corsette, and classic sandal, which was to give to the Sauchie Hall pupils the shapes of Venuses and nymphs, with the ankles of Vestris.

Mrs. Mark Luke had not mentioned this advantage to Mark, for she knew whereabouts to throw her pearls; but the circumstance had no mean effect on her own maternal judgment.

To do the thing handsomely, and in good style, Mrs. Mark ordered a Tontine chaise one morning, and making herself and her daughter—Jenny, looking after her, said—"as fine as *hands* could make them," fur-

nished herself with a supply of her newly engraved visiting cards, and repaired to the Sauchie-Hall Road Establishment. Her spirits, if not quite so ebullient, were at least as much fluttered as those of her daughter, as her anticipations of, for the first time, finding herself in the same room with the *Exclusive* Smiths, the objects of her imitation, envy, and admiration, for so many years, were not wholly pleasing.

As the walls of "the Establishment" were discerned among the trees, a sudden faintness struck to her bold heart; but what will not a dutiful and affectionate mother encounter for her only child,—and that child rich, and moreover a girl, and one too, whatever flatterers might affirm, whose substantial frame, as her mother perceived, would require the united force of the mysterious cestus, the sandal, and the calisthenics of Belle Retiro, to be moulded at sixteen, into that of a Grace.

A drive of a half hour had been interrupted only by the numerous gay and eager inquiries of blithe restless Mysie, rejoicing equally in her new grand school and her glossy pink sash, and such habitual and unconscious maternal admonitions delivered every three minutes, as "Hold up your head, Robina! Mind your carriage, Miss Luke.—Take your fingers from your mouth, child.—Your French kid gloves will not be fit to be seen before we reach the Establishment."

But before the lustre of Miss Luke's French kids was wholly gone, the chaise had wheeled within the gate of the seminary, and the fatal bell was rung! It will not do for ladies, whose business it is to teach *morals* with *manners*, to tell many direct fibs. Mrs. Smith was "at home," and Mrs. Luke and her daughter were ushered into an empty drawing-room, and left for a half hour to admire the harp, and couches, and conversation-stools, and apology-tables, and cabinets, and the painted paste-board ornaments, elegancies, and utilities, quite at their leisure, while a family council was holding above stairs.

"By the greatest good-fortune in the world, I had a glance of the triple-bordered Paisley shawl of the grocer's lady of three-tails," said Miss Maria.

"There can be no doubt about the business of the embassy," rejoined Miss Smith.

"We have several vacancies, Bell," said Madame Mère, thoughtfully.

"None, madam, for Mark Luke's daughter," returned Bella, the true *head* of the Establishment, in a tone of ineffable decision.

Many ideas passed with rapidity through the brain of Mrs. Smith. "Mark Luke, Esq., Dr. to Mrs. Smith and daughters, for the board and education of Miss Luke," &c. was in particular, an inviting set-off, to a long bill for the tea, sugar, and soap, required for the uses of the Establishment. She gave her thoughts oblique speech.

"Our family has been obliged by the consideration shown by Mark Luke, at that very unpleasant time when Mr. Smith's affairs became deranged."

"Ma'am, is it your wish to ruin the seminary?" cried Miss Smith, addressing her mother in a tone of asperity. "Receive Luke's daughter:—have her vulgar bustling mother going about the town proclaiming that her Miss is with us,—and lock up your doors.—Could ever the Higgins, or the Dempsters, or the Haigs send, or recommend another pupil to you? I put the case to yourself, ma'am,—would *you* have sent *your own* daughters to a school where a grocer's child was placed?"

"That was in other days, Bell; and I——"

"Stay, madam; has not the main cause of our success been that we are so very *select*,—known to be so particular about whom we receive,—so rigid in our rule of excluding all suspicious characters,—that no taint of vulgarity, no pupil with improper local connexions is admitted within our doors. What else, pray, makes even this Mrs. Mark Luke besiege them? It is very possible that many useful branches, and even the accomplishments, may be taught in the common schools of Glasgow, almost as well as in our seminary; but here is our grand and marked distinction, from which if we once deviate——"

"This child will be very rich," interrupted Mrs. Smith; who was, we fear, incapable of taking so comprehensive a view of any subject as her *intellectual* eldest daughter. She could squabble about pews and caps, but she failed to comprehend the grand resources which are afforded by the principles of Exclusivism in British society, throughout all its grades.

"Rich, my dear mother!" retorted Bella, spitefully; "and what is her wealth to us? There are rich girls enough about Glasgow and Paisley, I dare say; but what is that to the purpose of vulgarizing the Establishment by admitting such a candidate as this?"

Mrs. Smith began to see the affair in the proper light; but she would not at once yield. "You are not always so very *select*,

Miss Smith," she returned. "There was the Belfast girl, not a whit more genteel than little Luke,—and the Campbelton girl, and that sallow creature from Manchester."

"*Une batarde,*" put in Maria,—who, though she meant to vote with her sister for the exclusion of Mysie, chose to speak against her.

"No, you were not always so *very select*, Miss Smith," repeated the piqued *Madame Mère*.

There was so much at stake that Miss Smith resolved not to sacrifice the family interests, her own included, to her own temper, nor yet to her mother's *silliness*. Meanwhile, time was pressing, for the candidate waited below.

"I am astonished, mother, how you, with your excellent sense and knowledge of life, can take so narrow a view of this affair. I am certain your kind heart betrays your head:—Mark Luke's attention to my father's affairs I am not disposed to forget any more than you,—and if there were any way of obliging the man save this. Have you forgot the Kilmarnock carpet-maker's girl, who nearly ruined the school?"

"She was a very pretty, clever, sweet child:—I have not forgot her," said Mrs. Smith, in a natural tone.

"Granted, ma'am; but what is that to us? It is hard that we should suffer by other people's misfortunes. There are plenty of excellent schools for the children of the *low* rich."

"Ten vacancies in my establishment at present, Miss Smith."

"Were there twenty, madam, I will never depart from the principle. You know well the cause of your thin house this year. Those few drops of black blood which I detected at first glance in the Greenock girl, and warned you of——"

"My gracious!" cried Mrs. Smith, in a very natural manner; "she was two removes from the Hindoo on the one side, and four on the other—an heiress and a lawful child—and that malicious, prating woman——"

"No matter, ma'am. It is quite superfluous to tell me of the babbling propensities, and the love of gossip and scandal, either among West-country ladies, or East-country ladies. But since our success depends no little upon their tongues, we must keep out of their reach. The fewer Glasgow damsels we receive the better. I never desire to see a St. Mungo's Miss within our doors. The prying and tittle-tattle of the Betty Bagles and Penny Parlanes are absolutely ruinous to the *low* schools; and the more distant the townspeople are held, even by us, the better for the seminary. A small degree of mystery is necessary in every professional undertaking. Let the people of the *small* schools parade their reverend patrons and public examinations, and placard their marvellous systems: *Exclusiveness*, depend upon it, is the true foundation of our select society. If we once give way, if we deviate from the exact line of demarcation to be maintained between birth and fashion and the mere mob dung-hill wealth lying at our door, depend upon it, ma'am——"

"Well, well, take your own way, Miss Smith," said Madame Mère, quite convinced, but far from satisfied; and the Swiss governess, Mademoiselle Curchod, whose department it was, besides teaching the French language and embroidery, to tell lies polite for her board and her salary of £30, was deputed to dismiss Mrs. Mark Luke with all imaginable civility. This office, the young lady, (who, by the way, was said in Glasgow to be a cousin of Madame de Stael's, by the mother's side,) performed with such good grace, that Mrs. Mark Luke invited her to tea, and half believed it must be impossible for Mrs. Smith, or her daughters, to see a visiter at this hour; and that they exceedingly regretted their inability to receive her. It was, however, with some failing of heart that Mrs. Luke seated herself in her chaise, musing on Mademoiselle's announcement of the applications, ten deep, for every vacancy occurring in the "Society."

The visit was not wholly thrown away. Mysie, on the alert about her future schoolmates, had caught a peep of some of the peeping Misses. They all, from six to sixteen, wore a sort of conventual costume, as ugly and un-English as possible. "Mamma," said Mysie, "why have the Misses their hair tied up that ugly way, as if they were going to wash their faces?"

"Robina, love, hold up your head!—how do you think Mrs. Smith will receive a slouching, awkward Miss?—That is the present fashion of young ladies in France, which Miss Maria has introduced. Miss Fanny Ayton, and Miss Fanny Kemble, wear their hair in that style."

And when Mr. Luke marvelled at his daughter, disguised and uglified, from her hair being dragged into a net, and her little person invested with a Swiss apron, he was informed that the one was favourable to her eyes and her studies, and the other to her habits of tidiness.

For two weeks, and finally for ever, these improvements remained the sole advantages mother or daughter derived from the *Belle Retiro* Establishment. Mrs. Mark Luke once more left her card, and waited the leisure of the presiding genius of the Society one Saturday and another.

Mrs. Mark Luke had now every where announced the high destination of her daughter; and this protracted silence made her so anxious and unhappy, that she took courage, and despatched an unexceptionable note,—on rose-tinted paper, and smelling horribly of musk,—simply—simple woman!—announcing her own, and her husband's intention of placing Miss Luke at Sauchie Hall, for the benefit of the invaluable instructions in morals and manners of Mrs. Smith and her accomplished daughters. It went against her pride to be thus urgent—she whom poor but excellent teachers of all sorts had so long humbly and diligently solicited;—but what will not a fashionable mother do for her only child—that child a girl, and of "considerable expectations?"

Anxiously did Mrs. Mark Luke await the response, which came one morning just as she returned from a round of calls, in which Miss Luke had accompanied her, to take leave of her friends preparatory to going to school. The paper, of the first quality, was, in this case, neither tinted nor perfumed; but so long-tailed and conglomerated were the characters traced on it, that—what with the *e* added to the tail of the Smith, and the *i* changed to a *y*—it cost Mrs. Mark Luke considerable trouble to make out "how very much Mrs. D. *Smythe* regretted that there was no present vacancy in the select number of young ladies received into her *Society*, and no probability of any one occurring which warranted Mrs. S. in entertaining the hope of ever having the pleasure of seeing Miss Luke—a most interesting charge!—a member of her family."

The *Smythes* had changed their tone in latter days. The *Exclusives* upon calculation, were no longer haughty and insolent in manner.

Mrs. Mark Luke understood the case—or guessed at it; but she was rather mortified at her own condition than angry with them. How Miss Betty Bogle would sneer, and Penny Parlane exult over her! "It is all along, Mr. Luke, of your having no place of our own. If I could have left my card at the seminary as Mrs. Mark Luke of Halcyon Bank, you would have seen another sort of answer to my application for our Robina: and there it is for ever in the papers! It is a marvel to me such a gem, and such a *rug*, is not nipped up long ago. There is young John Cowan, the drysalter, and some of the Jamaica Street knobs, I am told, are after it. But far would it be from me, Mr. Luke, to wish that you should hurt your pecuniary circumstances by the purchase. I am content to leave that charming place to those who can better afford it than my husband."

Cunning Mrs. Mark Luke! Mark was fairly piqued at last; in his purse-pride, and in his paternal and conjugal affection; while his prudence was largely propitiated by another "Upset Price still Farther Reduced."

In a month Halcyon Bank was his own,—and in the first delirium of her vanity and exultation, Mrs. Mark Luke's naturally kind heart had expanded far beyond the narrow boundaries of cold Exclusivism; and, between good-nature and social vanity, she had so far forgotten strict propriety, as to invite all the world—country cousins, and vulgar old acquaintances included—to her Marine villa. She had been excluded from pews, boxes, burial-grounds, and boarding-schools; but now she was to be happy—perfectly happy!

O, Seged, King of Ethiopia! if thou, in the plenitude of imperial potency, with all appliances and means, could not command felicity for a single day, what envious, mocking fiend tempted to betray our Mrs. Mark Luke, with those brilliant, illusive *jack-a-lanterns*, which, in all ages of the world, have dazzled to bewilder the daughters of men, and to drag them on through bog and morass, only to land them knee-deep in the mire at last? Yet were not all her hopes illusive; for happy was the little hour in which she first ran over the garden, and then explored, as its mistress, every garret and doghole of Halcyon Bank. In that state of flutter and beatitude, we shall for a time leave Mrs. Mark Luke to the sympathy of our indulgent readers. They will not grudge one little hour of bliss without alloy to a woman before whom lies the task of *finishing* and marrying a daughter upon the Exclusive system of the middle ranks in Great Britain.

CHAPTER II.

We left our ambitious and indefatigible heroine, Mrs. Mark Luke, fluttering upon the verge of a new and brilliant existence, which was to be all felicity, because all was to be elegance, taste, style, fashion, refine-

ment, high life, "Shakspere, and the musical glasses." She was now the undoubted mistress of "the beautiful Marine villa of Halcyon Bank, on the Ayrshire coast, lately erected by Malcolm Gengebre, Esq., of Berbice," and about to celebrate the opening of this the second decade of her fashionable career, by what she was pleased to term a *fête*. She had, indeed, obtained her husband's approval of a *house-heating*, as the old-fashioned Glasgow folk continued to call such solemnities; while male guests, still *in medio* as to manners and refinement, named such banquets a *feed;* or, if persons of fervid imagination, a *glorious feed.*

It became a question of some importance among certain orders on 'Change, who was to have the felicity of being of the number of the *feeders* on the approaching Saturday. But Mrs. Mark was upon her guard Glasgow-ward. In passing the first turnpike, on her way to her coast villa, she had secretly thanked her stars that she was done of the Trongate, in her own peculiar; and the sooner Mr. Luke cut the concern, and commenced country gentleman, it was just so much the better. Like the long imprisoned chrysalis, she had, in the fulness of time, wriggled out of the husk of early *low* connexions; and was, at last, about to expand her gold-bedropt wings to the sun of fashion, waiting only for an auspicious hour to take her first flight in her new state. But to the complete and satisfactory fulfilment of her soaring designs, there were still impediments. To be consistently *exclusive*, it is necessary to possess a cold narrow heart, as well as a haughty temper, and the capacity of insolent manners when an object is to be gained by their exhibition. This does not, however, in the least impeach the other requisites of suppleness, flattery, meanness, and gross insincerity. To be *rigidly* exclusive, it is, above all, necessary to subdue the social feelings and vanities to the subservience of less immediate gratifications — to be, in short, strictly *self-denied*, as well as aspiring. Now, our Mrs. Mark Luke had a considerable share of cordial good-nature in her original composition, and no small quantity of a rather kindly, social vanity, which often threw her off her guard. Thus, by giving way to a single impulse of natural feeling, or to the desire of astonishing her old friends with her superfluities and superlatives, she sometimes was driven, in a single day, from the high ground which it had cost her six months to gain. This, as we have said above, was fatally visible at the grand epoch of entering on possession of her villa. The pride of place had so warmed and expanded her heart, that, in running about to make purchases, her kindness had overflowed upon every creature she met; and old *vulgar* acquaintances, of all degrees and conditions, had been most thoughtlessly and promiscuously invited to occupy the "spare-bed," "the French bed," and "the barrack-room," fitted up to accommodate the juvenile branches of that great *East-country* house, the Lennoxes, into which Mr. Gengebre had the honour to have intermarried.

Had Mr. Luke been about to stand candidate for the Lord Provostship of Glasgow, his lady could not have been more lavish and indiscriminating in her offers of hospitality to whomsoever should visit the Largs that season. This was but an impulse of excited vanity. The sober calculations of Mrs. Mark Luke, once set down in her new neighbourhood, showed a very different result. While hospitality supposed no compromise of *gentility*, or cost nothing save words, which might be sincere for the moment, it was all very well; but, in Mrs. Mark's original circles, words still stood for things; and an earnest invitation to spend a week might be very fairly construed, by Miss Parlane or Miss Bogle, into one for at least two days. Among the higher orders of fashionable intelligences, powers, and dominions, the conventional language of invitation, like that of compliment, possesses as many shades of meaning as certain Chinese characters, which are, however, all perfectly well understood at first sight by the erudite and initiated,— but our ancient maidens were unversed in this science.

This capital blunder, committed at the outset, cost Mrs. Mark Luke considerable trouble and manœuvring. One and another old friend dropped in upon her on the coast, even before her preparations were completed — before she was ready to dazzle and astonish them with the wonders of her Great Babylon! One blunder brought its own excuse, if it was not made upon calculation. In the same parish, there was a family of decayed gentry, chiefly supported in their ancient dilapidated mansion of Hawgreen, by sons in India. Mrs. Mark Luke had set her heart upon making *their* acquaintance. It might prove to her a diploma of fashion — a passport to other and greater houses: — perhaps to—— but no — her mind allowed itself no such flight as the provincial baronetage. She

merely admired the exterior of the adjoining seat of ——, and craved liberty of the factor to be in raptures with the grounds. Now, it chanced that Miss Penny Parlane was a cousin, not above four times removed, of the house of Hawgreen; wherefore, &c. Q.E.D. —So Miss Penny obeyed the signal, and in due time moved to Halcyon Bank.

The Hawgreen family, though undeniably gentry, were found much more accessible and affable than the Smythes. During Miss Penny's visit, the first mutual morning calls and tea-drinkings were happily accomplished; so that respectable sexagenary maiden was, consequently, quite at liberty to return to the Trongate as soon as ever she pleased. This she did, loaded with *peace-offerings*, in the shape of the fruits, flowers, and dairy produce of Halcyon Bank; —cucumbers, which the ungrateful guest laughingly described as "liker *kale-custocs* — and *fusionless* strawberries, which it cost her more trouble and expense to bring home, than the worth of the triple of them in Glasgow market." Such, we fear, are but too often the thanks which the ungrateful inhabitants of luxurious cities give to their rural friends, in exchange for the produce of their vineries and pineries, and mushroom beds and cucumber frames.

Miss Betty Bogle had desperately resented her friend, Miss Parlane, being preferred to herself in priority of invitation; but she shrewdly suspected the motive. Miss Penny was at this time a *tea* in her debt — as shown by the mental ledger kept by both parties— and an invitation being sent through the *lass* the evening following her mistress's return, Miss Betty vindicated her dignity by first declining, and then gratified her curiosity by, in a few hours, accepting the call. Miss Parlane had, indeed, softened the affair by requesting the assistance of her friend in concocting currant jelly of the coast fruits, and by sending her a full share of the horticultural bounty of Mrs. Luke. So, precisely as the handle of the Ram's-horn Kirk clock indicated five, Miss Betty placed her work-apron in her black silk reticule, and, trysting her *lass* to come for her at "*preceese* nine," took her way to her appointment.

These ladies had co-operated in the currant-jelly manufacture for about thirty summers. Within the same period, they had had as many feuds; but mutual interest still drew them together. They agreed like a Yankee mess.

Great now was the mutual joy of the jarring inseparables in meeting after a separation of nearly ten days. Whether the one was first to unlock the Glasgow budget, or the other to open the coast despatches, became the difficulty. There was a compromise; and questions and answers were alternated with breathless haste. "So ye found the Pig-wife in all her glory!" said Miss Bogle, girding up her loins with her checked apron, and beginning to pick blackberries as if for dear life. "And I hope ye was able, mem, to do the job, and get her introduced to the Hawgreen family? But siller makes itself sib, now-a-days, a' gaits.—As Bob Pirgivie said to me the other day in the Gallowgate, 'Call ye him Mark Luke— now, I call him Mark *Luck*, Miss Betty.' He is a queer hand, Bob. But when is that wonderful house-heating to take place?—or it would be ower, it's like, mem, before Mrs. Luke *let you hame*?"

Miss Parlane took no notice of this spiteful observation. She was, indeed, still quite in the dark as to the impending festival, but did not choose to confess as much.

"The Hawgreen leddies have, on my introduction, condescended to countenance Mrs. Luke as a stranger in the place, so far as 'Fair good-e'en' and 'Fair good-day.' It's neither to be thought nor wished they can put themselves upon a footing of equality with Peter Peaston's dochter."

"I'm glad to hear there was some sma' remittance last month from Major David— he is the third son, I'm thinking?" drawled Miss Betty, spitefully. "I dare say it did not come before it was needed. 'Lord help the gentles!' as the by-word gangs;—'puir folk can beg.' —— But I beg your pardon, Miss Penny. It does my heart good to see a real auld family, like your cousins, the Hawgreen folk, getting its head aboon water, now-a-days, that sae muckle o' the scum o' the cog has come up.— But is it true, mem, that Mrs. Luke has furnished her drawing-room splender-new with yellow silk damas from Edinburgh;—and that lovely buff chintz, lined with blue, not up three year till come next October, and never was washed yet, and glazed, I believe ——"

"Just as true as ye are picking blackberries, mem; and that's but a flea-bite to Bauby Peaston's grandery. Is't possible, think ye, mem, that Mark Luke can stand such on-goings? They say he sells dear— and no wonder he sells dear: there's aye, Miss Betty, a *wherefore* for a *because*. That sugar before ye, mem, cost me 8¾d.—strings and blue paper into the bargain—ready

money, over Mark Luke's counter; and I could have bought as good for 8½d. in twenty shops in Glasgow. It's no' on fractions Bauby Peaston's state is kept up; but I do not like to go past Mark with my change, were it but for decent, worthy, auld Mrs. Luke his mother's sake. I hope ye will call on her with me the morn: I promised to visit the auld lady on my return, and take her a share o' the cucum'ers."

These maiden friends often went their morning rounds of visitation in a leash, and did so now. Old Mrs. Luke was rejoiced to hear of her darling Mysie's health, of the flourishing condition of the onion crop in her son Mark's new garden, and that Hawkie gave eleven Scots pints of milk *per diem.* She therefore distributed her currant wine and quality cakes to her maiden guests with the most hospitable profusion; blessing the "good son," who let her want for nothing, and the attentive daughter-in-law who had sent her the cucum'ers, which, though rather *teuch* for auld teeth, were, as she remarked, "grand things to them that liked them."

"Indeed, mem," roared Miss Betty Bogle, in consideration of the old lady being a very little deaf, "a bottle of her good fresh cream, or a pound of her new-kirned butter, would have been as acceptable to townsfolk."

"But they wouldna have been so *genteel*, ye ken," put in Miss Penny, in a mood between a laugh and a sneer. The prudent old lady made no reply, though she also was moved to inquire when Mrs. Mark was to have the house-heating, and once more arranged, at great length, for a seat in the post-chaise with the two friendly maidens and their respective bandboxes.

Many things fall out between the cup and the lip: and so it was here. Nothing was now farther from the intention of Mrs. Mark Luke than that any one of the three should, by their old-fashioned manners and past-date gowns, disgrace her *fête.* She was now tolerably sure of at least a part of the Hawgreen family. Providence had sent a revenue cutter to that part of the coast, with officers, of course—though Mrs. Luke afterwards found that respecting these officers she had made a capital blunder—and also a Port-Glasgow family of distinction, in search, probably, of bitterer salt water than they found at home. And, to crown all, Mr. Ewins, the travelled gentleman, who had been bred to the church, had just obtained a living in that part of the country; and had a baronet, a former pupil, on a visit to him, a share of whose society he had particular reasons for grudging to nobody who would accept of the compliment.

The said baronet was rather under a cloud at this time. He was newly out of the Sanctuary of Holyrood, very gracefully bearing the opprobrium of having, in five years, run through his large fortune on the Turf, as well as the very small fortunes of his sisters. But he was not the less Sir Ogilvy Fletcher; nothing could untitle him; and Mrs. Mark Luke was disposed to be very indulgent to the first specimen of chivalry she had ever had the honour to receive under her humble roof. With such elevated prospects, she resolved to exclude, *in toto,* the whole horde of Mark's vulgar relatives. With her own, she stood on no sort of ceremony. The blood of the Peastons was at this time no more regarded than so much Paisley red puddle, which had dyed some thousands of pullicat handkerchiefs. Indeed, had it been possible to efface every trace of her birthplace in that very *ungenteel* town, Mrs. Mark Luke would have been highly gratified by the obliteration. To have been born in Dunbarton or Renfrew might have been tolerable: they were ancient and feudal, and had castles a-piece.

As the great day drew near, Mrs. Luke began to intimate her fears that the weather was still but *blue* on the coast; and, by and by, she came to apprehend it would not be safe for *grannie* (her *nom de caresse* for her mother-in-law) to venture from Balmanno Street till the cauld July winds were past. "The old lady would, besides, very naturally wish to meet her Saltcoats grandchildren, the Sprots, and that would be the very time to have all the relations together. If Miss Parlane and Miss Bogle could *agree* with one bedroom between them, it would be altogether a nice Glasgow party of *auld* friends to enjoy their *auld* cracks." Thus, with a coaxing mixture of her vernacular speech, which our heroine always used when she had a point to carry, did Mrs. Mark Luke address her husband.

"Oh, but grannie *must* come, mamma, to the dance," cried little Mysie, throwing her arms round her father's neck. "I'm wearying, *sair, sair,* to see grannie, and to show Jamie Wilson my wee bantams."

"Don't be pert, Miss Luke!—*Sair, sair!*—where did you learn to say *sair,* Miss, with your broad Glasgow twang?"

"*Sair* is a very gude Scotch word, gudewife," said Mark, quickly—"better than

your *sore*, I'm sure—which puts one in mind of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; while *sair*, *sair*, bespeaks the crushed waefu' heart in a metaphorical sense only." And to this philological remark, probably the first and last he ever made, Mark added,—"It is but natural for Mysie to long to see her own grandmother, who was aye so kind to her. My mother will be fourscore next month—a lang age, gudewife; and it is but short time we can look to have her among us. I would even rejoice to see my mother at the last house-heating I am ever like to ha'e, and the last she is ever likely to enjoy, as the sang says—

Wi' her bairns and her oes a' around her, O."

No resource was left for our elegant Mrs. Mark Luke, save her cambric pocket handkerchief—that friend in need to ladies of extreme sensibility. She was quite overwhelmed by the gloomy images Mr. Luke had conjured up.

"Oh, mamma, dinna cry!" exclaimed little Mysie, springing from her father into her mother's arms, with the trustful affection which proved that, whatever vanities filled a large portion of the mother's breast there was also room there for sweeter feelings. "Dinna cry, mamma—grannie winna dee—dinna let mamma greet, papa."——There is some use in children at all ages: they are admirable conductors of natural sympathies—the best makers-up of domestic feuds.

"I'm sure I meant not to grieve ye, gudewife," said Mark, in the proper deprecatory tone of conjugality. "Manage your house-heating, and your housekeeping both, as best pleases ye; only let me warn you, Miss Bogle called at the shop yesterday to inquire when it was to be; and if she be not asked, I can tell ye, there will be news of it in Glasgow!"

"As she has got her blonde lace mutch cleaned, and a new back breadth to her black satin gown, for the occasion," cried Mrs. Luke, bursting into a rather violent laugh, which somewhat grated on Mark's feelings, so recently attuned to the melting mood. "But if I defied the lash of Betty Bogle's tongue, and her *clishmaclaver*, when I was a single, unprotected woman, I defy her and her likes, ten times more now, when the interests and prospects of my child require that I should move in a sphere widely different from that of the clashing auld maids of the Trongate of Glasgow.—To be sure, I may, in an overly way, have asked Miss Bogle to look in upon us if she came to this part of the country; but upon my sincerity——"

"That's no' just the fit oath for the occasion, gudewife," said Mark, with some humour.

"Well, well, Mr. Luke. But, I am sure, you know how I detest that eternal, vulgar *gudewife* of yours."

"Shall I call ye *ill-wife*, then?"

"To be done with this nonsense, Mr. Luke: I think between ourselves, Miss Parlane and Miss Bogle, at their time of life, and with their narrow means, might find better uses for their siller than jaunting about the country in post-chaises; starving their women servants at home, on three-and-sixpence a-week of board wages, and the coals locked up."

To part of this statement Mark tacitly subscribed; but as his wife, in his own hearing, had urged these ancient friends to visit her in her new domicile, and, above all, to assist at the house-warming, he could neither in heart nor conscience approve this cool cutting. No such thing was intended by Mrs. Mark as a complete *cutting*. She had, at bottom, considerable regard for her ancient friends; and, at all events, it was as essential that they should witness her splendour at the proper season, and report accordingly, as that they should not dim, by their presence, the lustre of her first grand initiatory *fête*.

"To make all right and easy, I had cast about in my own mind that the *retour* chaise which takes up the Hawgreen ladies to Glasgow next week, may bring back the Trongate friends and my mother-in-law at small cost, by speaking a judicious word to the driver yourself, Mr. Luke; and sparing the ladies' purses."

Mr. Luke looked all acquiescence and approval, and admiration of his wife's sagacity.

"And James Wilson can sit with the post-boy," said Mysie, not without forecast in her own small concerns.

"Hold your tongue, Robina," cried the mother—"and remember that your father's apprentice is no companion for you—a great boy, too! For shame, Miss!"

Poor Mysie blushed scarlet, and hung down her abashed head. The boy alluded to was the son of that Dr. Wilson, the notice of whose lady at children's balls and school exhibitions had, a few years before, been considered so gracious an attention by the grateful Mrs. Mark Luke, who, upon such occasions, poured whole bags of sweetmeats

upon her daughter's partner in the dance. She had also, in spite of his father, presented him with a very handsome Shetland pony, sent, for this express purpose, to Mr. Luke, by a commercial correspondent in the Shetland islands. These days were past: Dr. Wilson had died of a fever, caught in attending a poor patient, and had left a widow and a numerous family in very straitened circumstances. Mr. Mark Luke was one of the trustees of a subscription for their relief, which his wife, to do her justice, promoted to the utmost of her power. She also made her husband receive the eldest lad, her former favourite, as an apprentice. The boy, who had early set his heart upon his father's profession, gave a reluctant consent; and his sorrowful and subdued mother was even thankful that one of her seven children was decently, though humbly, provided for — as Mark remarked, that he had no son of his own, and if James behaved well, he should never want a friend. A remembered conversation, which took place shortly after the boy came to the shop, still rankled in the aspiring mind of Mrs. Mark Luke.

At fourscore, *Grannie* Luke took a true grandmother's delight in arranging matches for her descendants; and, accordingly, one evening at tea, she sagaciously remarked, "I cannot see what better ye could do, Mark, my man, if the mistress is agreeable, and if they be spared, puir things, than to buckle our wee Mysie and Jamie Wilson. But let him be out o' his 'prenticeship first. Ye'll ha'e him o' your ain up-bringing, and he can carry on the shop when ye tire o' it and gang to Halshie Bank for gude and a'. It's no likely my good-dochter will fash ye with mair o' a family now, after a rest of —— how auld are ye, Mysie, hinnie?" Mysie knew she was past ten, which she, accordingly, told to a day. She also knew that ten and seven make seventeen, and that young Mrs. Dudgeon, whom she had lately visited with her mamma on that young lady's marriage, was just seventeen and five months; but this fact she did not feel called upon to mention. "It was a divert, Mark, my man," maundered on the grandmother, "to see the wark the bits o' young things had with ane anither, when, I am sure, our Mysie was no owergane seven summers. 'Wha are ye for marrying the day, Mysie, my doo?' I would speer. 'Is it Bailie Pirgivie?' and she would prim up her bit mouth, and say, 'Wha but the little doctor, grannie?' 'That's if mamma let ye, Mysie,' I would observe, just to try the bairn. 'I'll marry Jamie Wilson whether mamma let me or no'; ' and, troth, she would gar me laugh, fit to choke." And the old lady laughed at the recollection till in danger of such a catastrophe.

Mrs. Mark Luke was fired with indignation at such maundering. Was there ever so absurd, so *indelicate* an old woman? She was quite enough of herself to vulgarize her grandchild's manners and corrupt her accent. If the boy and girl were to grow up together, there was, moreover, no saying what disastrous consequences might attend such nonsensical gossip. Thank Heaven, she was leaving Glasgow! And longer to receive the familiar visits of her husband's apprentice, and permit him to continue the playmate of her daughter, was a thing not to be thought of. If Robina, or, more correctly, "her child," was not to soar far above sugar tubs and crates of crockery and china, to little purpose, indeed, had her maternal cares been lavished.

Checked by her mother, as above noticed, the abashed girl had not another word to say; but her father came, as usual, to her assistance:—"We must have one of my Mysie's joes. If ye will not have little Jamie, then I must bring ye down her auld jo to cheer her a bit;—but, indeed, we must have the Bailie at any rate."

Mrs. Mark Luke was nearly petrified by the horrid image called up before her.

"Ye cannot mean Bailie Pirgivie?"

"But I do, though, just mean your auld friend, Bob Pirgivie, who was best-man at your bridal, mem; and made the punch at your dochter's christening.—What the de'il has come ower the woman!"

Mrs. Mark Luke was far past crying. After gulping her chagrin for a few seconds, she remarked, with dignity, "Then, Mr. Luke, if you introduce a person so totally unfit for the society which I expect to receive at your table to-morrow, you may just look out for some one else to take the head of it— that's all, sir. I *never—can—sanction* such an insult to my friends as introducing improper company to them in my own house."

"Bob can take the head," replied Mark, doggedly; "he makes a famous blowzy landlady; especially when he puts on a *mutch* and a shawl, before he draws the punch-bowl to him."

Mrs. Luke saw there was no wisdom in widening the breach. Though not an "interfering" husband, there was, she well knew,

a point beyond which, if Mark was unwisely urged, he became as stiff-necked as any Israelite. The hereditary *dourness* of the Lukes, as husbands, was, indeed, notorious over all the West.

"You know how much I was wont to enjoy Mr. Pirgivie's company at a homely family dinner, my dear; or in an evening, when he took a tumbler of toddy with you; but, believe me, Mr. Luke, it would put all parties sadly out of their way to bring him into the same dinner-party with young ladies —and none so much as himself. He would be entirely a fish out of the water."

"Fient-a-fears! Bob can aye swim where there's a full punch-bowl, Bauby."

"He could neither tell his stories nor sing his favourite songs with a clergyman present."

"He has sung at fifty Presbytery dinners, and fifty Thanksgiving-Monday feasts to boot, long before now, and been the cock of the company. Ye do not mean to say that Bailie Pirgivie sings what is either profane or indecent?"

"Far from that—only—only *ol*——old-fashioned. And Sir Ogilvy, Mr. Luke——"

"And Sir De'il, Mrs. Luke! If Sir Ogilvy cannot eat his slice of beef at the fire-side of Bob Pirgivie, he'd better stay at the manse; where, I dare say, they are tired enough, by this time, o' the broken ne'er-do-weel."

It is not altogether surprising that Mr. Luke was offended. Bob—who, by this time, was none of your light-Bobs—was his oldest and most confidential friend, his chosen counsellor in all his commercial speculations, and one whose shrewd advice had, as Mark truly averred, stood him in thousands of pounds. This was but one thing; and, more to the present point it was, that, at a feast or a *fêed*, there were, in Mark's eyes, but three grand essentials,—the beef, the punch, and Bob Pirgivie. In Glasgow, this gentleman had never been interdicted by Mrs. Mark, even in her most palmy and exclusive days. But, in that city, he was considered a regular part of all table lumber—a corner-dish, generally and warmly welcomed, and always tolerated. He was one of those originals to be found in most commercial communities, which, like certain wines and fruits, require to be used on the spot, to be perfectly enjoyed —as, in removal, much of the *race*, or peculiar flavour of the soil, is sure to be lost. There was, however, no reason to apprehend that Mr. Pirgivie's specific qualities would evaporate in so short a journey, or voyage, as from Glasgow to Largs. By trade he was a cotton manufacturer, and, by attention, a prosperous one; but, by social distinction, a diner, or, rather, a supper-out, a *bon-vivant*, a teller of good Westland stories, a singer of capital Scotch songs of a certain class, a humorist, the shaking of whose double-chin, and the sly twinkle of whose gray eye, told half the joke before he had opened his lips —a bachelor, of course, or he had not been Bob Pirgivie. Besides many original good local stories and anecdotes, Mr. Pirgivie had a happy knack at localizing, and adapting resuscitated Joe Millers to present circumstances. Until he had become so much of a Stout Gentleman, Mr. Pirgivie was reckoned the best curler in the Lower Ward. At concocting Glasgow punch—now that D—— and S—— had died off—he was allowed to be superlative and unapproachable—the monarch of the bowl! Such was Mrs. Mark Luke's present aversion. In her eyes, he was irredeemably blemished, for he had been put to the ban by the Smythes. His knee-breeches, speckled stockings, and amber wig, were deformities invincible: she had reasoned with him upon them all. His dialect sounded broader, in her refined ears, every day. She, moreover, suspected, that he slily insinuated mischief, if not rebellion, into the head of her lord; and, what was worse, that his excess of mock reverence, his odd tones and grimaces, and awkward scrapes to herself—he who had never before either bowed or scraped in his life—were what is vulgarly termed *quizzing*. The mantling smiles of his rubicund face, the sly glance round, as he paid her his high-flown compliments, and made his extraordinary legs, looked, it must be owned, something like this. He had another provoking trick of incidentally, as it were, calling her attention to some anecdote of their early life, particularly if very fine people were present—such as to their curds-and-cream *ploy* to Ruglen, or their veal-pie pic-nic to Kelvin Grove, where Miss Barbara Peaston, a bride-elect, with the said pie in her lap, had sung the favourite amatory song appropriate to that locality. In short, the facetious Bob Pirgivie was, to Mrs. Mark Luke, become the most boring of all bores—a thoroughly disagreeable person at all times, but at her *fête* intolerable! She ruminated for a time.

"Leave the room, Robina, my love." She was obeyed. "As it is, after all, mainly for *our daughter's* sake, Mr. Luke, [*emphatically*,] that we give this welcoming party to our

new neighbhours, I dare say a larger mixture of young creatures, and, perhaps, a ball, would best do the thing."

"Very like, Bauby: all young things are fond of dancing."

"Then, I think, we shall *postpond* the dinner to an indefinite day, and give the ball first—and to-morrow: so you may announce the change of plan to our Glasgow friends."

"And bring down Bob Pirgivie, and little James Wilson to Mysie's dance? with all my heart, gudewife."

Mrs. Mark Luke threw back her head. "It appears to be your dearest pleasure to torment me, Mr. Luke."

"Far from that, dearie. Am I not bringing you a box of champagne glasses, which, I am sure, you need about as much as a cart does a third wheel? However, it's all good for trade."

Mrs. Luke now took it into her head that her husband should not leave home that day at all. He had, indeed, been complaining. She became tenderly alarmed at the fatigue of going up the one day to Glasgow and returning the next; but there was a meeting of Bank Directors, or of the Steam-boat Company, or something of the kind, and Mark would go; and, to say the truth, save for dread of Bob, Mrs. Mark could, at this time, on many accounts, well spare him. She was cumbered with many things; up early and down late.

The important day dawned at last; and, after six weeks of preparation, she kept the field to the very last hour, fagged enough, when fairly inducted into her new Pomona green satin dress, "fashionable colour for July," and her turban properly set. Had it not been for the forward temper of Jean Sprot, a spanking, comely lass of some nineteen or twenty, she would at this time have brought her from Saltcoats as an aide-de-camp; but Miss Jean, as Mr. Luke's niece, would certainly expect to be introduced to the company, and dine at table; and rather than submit to such degradation, such encroachments on the prerogative, Mrs. Mark was content, until her daughter was qualified to assist her, to work double tides, and enjoy undivided glory.

She was now alone in the drawing-room with her daughter, putting Mysie for the *last* time, through the manual of good manners, and furtively casting an eye upon the road by which Mark's chaise, with that worthy host—and, not less important, the box of rich cut glass, the hamper of some rarer kind of wine, ordered from Leith, and the turbot from an Edinburgh fishmonger—were momentarily expected. She did not allow herself to think of the dire Pirgivie, till he loomed over the *brae*, seated for air beside the driver, with a face like the rising full Michaelmas moon —as Mrs. Mark indignantly remarked. There was no help for it.

"Servant, *Ma—dame*," said Bob, bowing low, with one of his leering looks up to the window, as the carriage wheeled round to the door. The open bay window of the dining-room showed the table and side-board laid out with elaborate elegance.

"Whew!" whistled Mr. Bob Pirgivie, "there's to be a snack of dinner, after all, Mark. As best-man at your bridal, Mrs. Luke, and assistant at every Handsel-Monday feast sinsyne, though something past my dancing days, and fashed with a twinge of what, in a gentleman, might be jaloused the gout, I vowed, when Mark told me the dinner was to be changed to a ball, not to baulk ye, but lead ye off

Upon the licht fantastic toe,

at least to the best of my present ability. Though I have seen the day, Bauby—Mrs. Luke, I mean,—we could have both footed it heel and toe more featly, some—ay, it will be five-and-twenty good years since—at Mr. Macskipsey's in the Sheddon Raw; but ye'll no mind, I dare say?"

"I am certainly obliged by your kind intentions," returned Mrs. Mark, half amused, in spite of herself, at the idea of Bob Pirgivie opening a ball, and also compelled to make a virtue of necessity; "will you choose to take any refreshment after your long drive? There are wines on the side-table, with lemonade, raspberry vinegar, and iced water."

"Ginger beer was the grand tipple of the young leddies at our Paisley balls, ye'll remember, Mrs. Luke, with *baiks* for the solids; and I'm not very sure but I relished that as weel as the genteel modern refreshments; but certainly, upon your recommendation, *Ma—dame*, I shall try a glass of lemonade—it should be very cooling and suitable for a man of my taste and mould after a longish, hot, dusty journey."

Mrs. Luke perceived that she was already quizzed, and anticipated worse usage. She laid strong control over herself, and protested she had only meant those harmless beverages as one constituent of the draught recommended; and Mr. Bob was somewhat conciliated by the large rummer mingled for him, as a drink-offering, by her own French-

kidded fair hand, and presented on a silver tray by Mysie.

"And how's a' wi' my Maiden Mysie? Am I not to get my kiss the day? Whether is it to be me or Jamie Wilson ye are to marry now? Let's be off or on?" He drew his hand fondly over her curls.

"Robina is growing a great girl, Mr. Pirgivie, and must put away childish things.—Will you hold your head for one moment in the same position, child? You will toss your hair about till it looks like a young colt's mane. You will see if the Miss Stronas go on romping like great tomboys, in that fashion. We expect the pleasure of seeing the Stronas of Port-Glasgow here to-day, Mr. Pirgivie: you are probably acquainted with the family—you must at least have heard of them:—three very elegant girls, and two fine young men—one of them, Mr. Charles, in the Company's service, home on a three years' leave."

"The who's, *Ma—dame?*" cried Bob, cocking his ear.

"The Stronas, sir, of Port-Glasgow."

"The *Stronas!*—I thought I kenned a'maist all the Port folk, but I never heard of the Stronas before. Are they safe folk, are ye sure, mem? There's a hantle rips come down here about the saut-water."

"The *Stronacks*, Mr. Pirgivie—you must surely have heard of them. Mrs. Stronack was a Dennison."

"The Stron—*acks?*—no, no, I ken naething about the Stronacks either."

"The Stron—*achs*, then, ye droll, provoking sorrow!" bawled Mrs. Mark Luke, with a native strength of gutturals which proved, that, besides conquering High German and Low Dutch, she needed not to despair of mastering the Erse or Arabic, the roots of which, we believe, lie even more deeply in the bowels of the land.

The first laugh they had enjoyed together for months, or perhaps for years, went far to reconcile these old friends. Mr. Bob, in particular, enjoyed his laugh and his triumph to that moderate extent which restored his good humour with Mrs. Luke; and he accordingly sipped his rummer of brandy-qualified lemonade with great complacency, and, much to the relief of his hostess, declared he would keep his place where he was, and not frighten her "leddies up stairs, until they got used to him by degrees, across the table."

But to this arrangement "senseless Mark" would not submit. "He would be master of his own house, if a' the Hawgreens, and Stronachs, and Sir Ogilvy Fletchers in Ayrshire, and Port-Glasgow on the back of it, dined with his wife; and his trusty fere, Bob Pirgivie, should have the warmest neuk at his fireside."

Something very extraordinary had come over the man within these few days. He had never been so obstreperous in his whole married life. Mrs. Mark Luke understood it all afterwards. Mark was fey.

Bob, accordingly, having put on his speckled silk hose, and, for the first time in his life, mounted a shirt collar, which made him look as if in the *jougs*,* was niched per force into a corner of the drawing-room before the first carriage had deposited its load; and there he continued to sit, a mute observer, (his amber wig covered with the rich yellow drapery of the window curtains,) most industriously twirling his thumbs, and taking sly note of the airs and graces of hospitality which marked the kind and courteous reception given by Mrs. Mark to her several gradations of guests—to the landed and the commercial interests, and to Mr. Ewins, who might be understood to represent the church and the learned professions. Bob's sober conclusion was, that Bauby Peaston performed her part quite as well as if she had been the Duchess of Hamilton, or a real play-actress. She even astonished Mark himself, by the volubility of her softly-lisped compliments, and the elegance of her deportment.

Every one expected, and probably more than were wished for, had now arrived, save the gentlemen from the cutter. They were at last announced; and at their back—what a start! what a mere vulgar natural start of surprise was betrayed by Mrs. Mark Luke, when who should present himself but Mr. Robert Smythe! "He had taken the great liberty, as an old friend, of waiting upon Mrs. Luke as his friends from the cutter, with whom he was going round to Oban, were, he found, engaged to her." She was so gratified, so delighted, so tenderly hopeful, that Mrs. Smythe, and Miss Smythe, and Miss Maria Smythe, were in perfect health—so proud to see Mr. Robert Smythe in *her* house!

Bob Pirgivie now tweedled his thumbs in double quick time, and rapidly sent around queer horizontal glances under his shaggy brows.

Just at this instant, Mysie whispered her mother, "Mamma, Jean is come."

* The Scottish pillory.

"Who, child?"

"Cousin Jean—Jean Sprot;" and the previously well-drilled maid-servant sonorously announced "Miss Jean Sprot!" and in bounced a good-looking, showy young woman, flaunting (at small cost) in the staple of the country, who intrepidly advanced to shake hands with her sinking, fainting, elegant aunt, then with her uncle, next with shy Mysie, and finally with her old acquaintance, Mr. Bob Pirgivie, who received her with great gallantry, and made room for her beside himself.

Mrs. Mark Luke made no movement to introduce the bold intruder to any one. Her evident displeasure and awkwardness instantly spread over at least the female part of the company, to whom one young woman of equivocal rank was a greater bugbear and annoyance than fifty vulgar humorists like the privileged Bob Pirgivie.

If Mrs. Mark Luke's black eyes had possessed the fabled property of those of the basilisk, this would, beyond doubt, have been the last hour of the audacious Jean Sprot, who actually dared to talk and laugh aloud in her aunt's house, as if among her equals. She even ventured to address Mr. Robert Smythe the advocate, himself, and to remind him that she had once met him at a Glasgow concert, where she had been with her "Aunt Luke."

"I must have been a mere boy, then," returned the affected barrister, whom a few years had ripened from a senseless puppy into an insolent coxcomb. "A precious lot *is* always to be met with at such places."

"At such places, indeed!" chorused Mrs. Mark Luke.

"At what places, please, Ma—dame?" inquired Bob Pirgivie, rising and stumping forward, with one of his low, ridiculous bows, to the lady of the house.

"Glasgow concerts, to be sure," replied Mr. Robert Smythe, tucking up his shirt-collar far above his ears.

This was more than pure Glasgow flesh and blood could be expected to endure. The honour of the whole city seemed to rest for the time upon the square shoulders of Bailie Pirgivie. He laughed at the ridicule which the *Exclusives* attempted to cast upon his own manners, and repaid them, as he said, *cent. per cent.;* but even Mr. Pirgivie could not submit to calumnies cast upon the refinement of the Empress of the West; and an explosion would have been inevitable, had not the good stars of Mrs. Mark Luke sent the summons to dinner at this critical moment. She had been ruminating uneasily for some time, about who was to conduct her to the dining-room. Was it to be Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, in right of his rank; Hawgreen, in respect of his old standing in the neighbourhood; Mr. Stronach of Port-Glasgow, as representative of the commercial respectability of the company; or that horrid Bob Pirgivie, the ancient friend of the house? Him she resolved to baulk, at all events.

"Do me the honour," said Mr. Robert Smythe, starting forward—and he was honoured by the fluttering, gratified, and yet alarmed Mrs. Mark Luke!—for Mr. Stronach looked as if cheated of his right, and a loser—while the baronet smiled sarcastically, and gave his arm to Mrs. Ewins.

"That's Edinboro' mainners," cried Bob Pirgivie—"at least the Smythe edition o' them; tak' ye my arm, Miss Jean: ye have had a long walk, lassie, from Saltcoats, the day, to your auntie's ploy!" Miss Jean herself gave him no thanks for this audible remark.

And now behold Mrs. Mark Luke as near as possible to the pinnacle of human felicity! On her right hand the representative of the house of Smythe, the object of her admiration and envy for twenty years, and a real live Edinburgh advocate into the bargain. At her left, the *nonchalant* Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, looking as if he could not help it. She only wished that she had had four more elbows to accommodate four more unexceptionable guests. True it was, Bailie Pirgivie's red round face already loomed large through the savoury haze of a tureen of soup, over which he flourished a preparatory ladle, and Miss Jean Sprot's eighteen-penny gaudy gauze tippet brushed that part of Captain Rogers' shoulders, where an epaulette should have been. Nothing human is without alloy; yet, at this springtide of exultation, pleasure greatly predominated—checked, but not materially subdued, by the incorrigible vulgarity of the incorrigible Bob, and the stately gravity of the titular Laird of Hawgreen.

Indeed, Mrs. Mark Luke had no leisure to note every thing, or one-half of what passed at her table.

Modern fashionable ladies give themselves no trouble about how people dine at their tables. It is enough that they may dine sumptuously if they choose. This was not yet her maxim. She would have insisted upon it—and, moreover, have seen the thing done, but that it is impossible to accomplish

every thing at once. The wants of Sir Ogilvy and Mr. Robert Smythe were at least carefully attended to, and she had leisure to feel a little disappointment or mortification that the Hawgreen ladies did not seem to know that the turtle was *real* turtle—not mock; but, in compensation, Mrs. Stronach was helped twice. The gentlemen, in general, were better informed; though none of them, save young Mr. Smythe, appeared to discover that the hock, the champagne, and eke the claret, had been procured from a celebrated Leith wine-merchant, belonging to the aristocracy of the country—"quality binding," which must consequently improve the *bouquet*. — Indeed, nothing like it was to be obtained in the western latitudes. Mr. Stronach himself resented this as stoutly as did Bailie Pirgivie; while the other gentlemen more civilly signified their dissent, by sticking to Mark's Madeira in preference. Mark—

Lest folks should say that he was proud -

did not like to proclaim how largely he had purchased from the *stocking* of the cellars of the late proprietor of Halcyon Bank. But, when Mr. Stronach launched forth in praise of Gengebre's capital East India Madeira, and the many "famous dinners" he had partaken of in that same room, while Gengebre was a bachelor, Mrs. Mark Luke could not refrain from hinting, that "such things had been," and "were most *dear:*"—that her husband's wine, in short, could be nothing inferior to that of his distinguished predecessor, unless age was a crime whether in wood or bottle.

There was both pleasure and regret to Mrs. Luke in perceiving that the three courses were fairly got through, and with credit; and the dessert, including the finest West India preserves, (a present to Mark, by the way, from an old 'prentice, now a planter in Jamaica,) was handsomely laid out in the beautiful *new set:*—preserved limes, preserved green ginger, preserved pine apple, and the preserved melons of Halcyon Bank.

"*Preserve* us a'!" cried Bob Pirgivie, turning up his eyes, as Mrs. Luke named and recommended the exotic delicacies. Mark was thrown into a most vulgarian fit of laughter by the Bailie's joke, in which several joined.

"And now, *Ma—dame,*" continued the Bailie, "that ye have exhausted the luxuries of the tropics, what would ye think of drawing next upon the empire of *Chinee?*" Mark was again in a convulsion of laughter at this joke, and Miss Jean Sprot was fairly under the necessity of stuffing her mouth with her pocket-handkerchief.

"Bring in the China punch-bowl, lass," cried Mark. And a very large and handsome one was placed before "the Emperor of China," who knowingly rung it with the long-handled ladle, which he twirled dexterously about, and wielded as a sceptre of command.

"I am afraid the claret is not to your liking, gentlemen," said the alarmed Mrs. Mark Luke, who, above all things, dreaded the early invocation of the *genius* of the bowl.

"Oh, oh, oh!" burst from all quarters of the table in manly tones—"superb claret!"

"Glasgow punch who pleases—I stick by the ladies and the Chateau Margaut," cried Mr. Robert Smythe aloud; and, having first carelessly offered the preserved pine near him to the ladies on each hand, and been refused, he emptied nearly the whole glass dish into his plate, with the free and easy air of a buck of the first head, to the utter horror of the old-fashioned Scottish good-breeding of Bailie Pirgivie.

"There's anither swatch o' Edinboro' mainners," said he.

"Saw ye ever such impidence?" whispered Miss Jean Sprot. "The pine apple, that has been an *honesty* to aunty at all her parties for six months, as it was aye potted up again, with a drib of fresh syrup." Fortunately, Mrs. Mark Luke could not hear what it was that so much amused the young ladies of Hawgreen, two pleasant, unaffected girls, who tried to look demure, yet began to enter into the humour of the scene, and of the characters; especially when the ci-devant Glasgow magistrate thus looked high disdain upon the ill mannered, effeminate Edinburgh lawyer, gobbling up the *tabooed* luxuries in presence of the ladies.

The delicate limes, the fresh and fragrant lemons, the triple-refined and pounded sugar, and the genuine old pine-apple rum, which, Bailie Pirgivie remarked, "smelt like a clow giliflower, and perfumed the whole room," were now all placed in order before him. The gentlemen, as they sipped their claret, began to eye and feel interest in his operations. Mr. Stronach would have presumed to direct; but him Bob Pirgivie regarded with the cool, silent contempt which became a man who had made and drank hogsheads of Glasgow punch, before the other had left off petticoats. Mr. Pirgivie was getting more and more into his natural element; and he was rising as rapidly with all the party, save the hostess, her henchman, and

Miss Stronach; until the opinions of the latter were changed by the Baronet whispering her, that "Pirgivie was more funny and comical than Liston himself."

Mrs. Mark Luke, at a loss upon this what to think, endeavoured to preserve her equanimity and composure, under the deliberate concoction of that fatal bowl, from which were to issue, by the dozen, vulgar toasts, and songs and choruses enough to swamp her beyond recovery. She resolved to carry off the ladies before Bob could, in common decency, toast, "*The outward bound*," or, "*The ladies that left us*."

One infliction it was impossible to escape. Mr. Robert Smythe had usurped the honour of handing her down stairs; but Bob, she feared, would yield to no man living—not even to the Port-Glasgow refiner, and certainly much less to the broken Baronet—the appropriate toast of the day—"THE ROOFTREE OF MR. MARK LUKE, AND LONG LIFE, HEALTH, AND HAPPINESS TO A' ABOUT AND BENEATH IT!" If fashion had not absolutely vitrified the heart of Mrs. Luke, she must have been affected by the genial spirit in which the stanch old friend of the house, standing up on his chair, and perspiring at every pore, uttered this social prayer. Mark himself was almost in tears; and so loud a shout of Hip-hip-hurrahs arose, that the ladies were fairly driven off.

"He is the funniest creature that, in the whole world," said Mrs. Luke, making the best of it, as, arm in arm, she ascended the stairs with Mrs. Stronach. "Vastly like Liston, indeed—don't you think so, ma'am?—as Sir Ogilvy remarked."

"Hark—singing!" cried Miss Isabella, the second daughter of the landed *landless* family, pausing in the general progress to the drawing-room; as, both loud and clear, arose—

My ain Fireside—

from the mellifluous throat of Bailie Pirgivie. In the halt, Mrs. Mark Luke was in a deadly *swither* whether to execrate the vulgarity of Bailie Pirgivie, or suffer the outbreak to pass. Miss Stronach seemed to curl her nose at the vulgar melody; but, on the other side, Isabella, the second daughter of Hawgreen, caught up the chorus, and warbled as they proceeded—

My ain fireside, my ain fireside—
Oh, sweet 's the bonny blink o' my ain fireside!

Notwithstanding her anxious and long study of precedents, Mrs. Luke was frequently, as upon the present occasion, at fault. Isabella was a gentlewoman by birth and education; but then Miss Stronach had been *finished* at Boulogne. Mrs. Luke remained in a state of philosophic doubt as to whether Bob's lyric was the thing or not. Deeper doubts were that day to distract her mind. As the sole daughter of the house, Mysie came in for some share of civil attention from the ladies. Her drawings were examined, and her lessons on the piano-forte listened to without much visible yawning. It is, however, not difficult to perceive when people yawn internally.

"I have an old promise from Mrs. Smythe to receive my daughter on her *very first* vacancy," observed Mysie's mother; "it is so great a favour.—I mean to be very bold with her, though; and actually to remind her again, through Mr. Robert, of her promise. What a very nice young man he is!"

"I wonder what all the world sees about that woman's school," said Miss Stronach, decidedly.

Mrs. Mark Luke bolted upright on her couch. THAT WOMAN! Was this epithet meant to describe Mrs. Smythe, the head of the *Belle Retiro* Establishment?

"The world of the West, I suppose, you mean, Nelly, for I should not imagine any less favoured region knows much about the Smythes, or their wonderful school," said the younger sister. Mrs. Luke stared with amazement; the orbits of her eyes distended.

"One might fancy some people hold a patent from nature to instruct," observed Mrs. Stronach, "to be used only when they can do nothing better. What advantages of education could an Edinburgh W.S.'s daughter have had forty years since? Such, I believe, was Mrs. Smythe's original *status;* and her daughters never had a teacher beyond the West of Scotland, save the younger girl, who was a few months in some petty French school."

Could such things be! Mrs. Mark Luke was nearly petrified. "I fancied, ma'am, your young ladies had enjoyed the advantages—had been educated at—I mean in—the *Belle Retiro* Establishment."

"To my sorrow, ma'am, Flora was there a few months;—and I assure you, when we went abroad to proper schools, the pain of unlearning all she had acquired was found a formidable affair. Her Swiss pronunciation of the French, Madame Didot found almost insurmountable. The Smythes had a Swiss governess"—

[Well did Mrs. Luke know that:—the

polite, poor, woeful Mademoiselle Curchod — the cousin of Madame de Stael. What an escape had Mrs. Mark Luke had for her Robina!]

—"A Swiss girl, as a sort of governess, ma'am, with such vicious habits ——"

"Gracious goodness!" exclaimed Mrs. Luke, throwing up her hands at the hidden wickedness, thus half discovered.

—"of English prosody, ma'am. I know nothing against the morals of the young woman."

Mrs. Mark Luke was not quite certain about this prosody aforesaid. Had it been syntax or grammar — or, as she called it, when ultra-fine in her pronunciation, *gramber* — she would have known. However, "vicious habits of English prosody" were, beyond all doubt, something to alarm careful mothers, and of very dangerous example in educating young ladies.

"There is always something wrong about those foreigners," observed Mrs. Mark Luke.

"Are they vitiated by the air of England?" said Mr. Ewins, the clergyman, who had glided in. "It is odd enough that British mothers should so eagerly run abroad to place their daughters wholly under the care of foreign instructors; and British society, at the same time, remain so distrustful of the few specimens who are domesticated among us."

"I wish to goodness I knew how best to place my daughter," sighed Mrs. Luke. "I am aware that Scotland, and, it would seem, England, are so far behind in — in"—— She hesitated —

"In the *cosmetic discipline*, Mrs. Luke—is that it?" said the clergyman, smiling. "In education it would not be difficult, I believe, to construct tables for the guidance of mothers, at least upon the present principles. The guiding maxim is, that every one shall run away from home, and the farther the better. If you have daughters at John o' Groat's, send them on to Aberdeen; if at Aberdeen, then off with them to Edinburgh; if in this latitude, then to London or Bath; while all London, with its multitudinous environs, rush over to schools on the French coast, or farther on, to Paris and its neighbourhood."

Mrs. Luke's duties, as a tender, dutiful, and, moreover, fashionable mother, became, at every advancing step, more heavy and complicated. She was, however, disposed to place more confidence in the taste and experience of Mrs. Stronach, than in the judgment of Mr. Ewins, travelled as he was.

"You could not, then, in conscience, recommend the *Belle Retiro* Establishment for my girl?" she whispered, drawing her new acquaintance to a window.

"It is a very delicate subject, indeed, ma'am," replied Mrs. Stronach. "I have *indicated* my opinion. But, as a friend, I may mention, that what I considered altogether intolerable, was the untidiness the Smythes allow in their pupils. My Flora yonder, for example, was allowed to loll about without stays, or with very ill-made ones, till the poor child grew out of all shape. Indeed, she has hardly yet recovered that six months of gross neglect."

"Shocking!" exclaimed Mrs. Mark Luke, throwing the proper degree of horror into her face; but as she looked at Miss Flora, still as plump as a partridge, bursting from her stays, — and her fat, fair, round shoulders disdaining all straps and ligatures, she mentally concluded that there might be a certain order of fine forms, which required more powerful restraints than the classic cestus and mysterious sandal of the *Belle Retiro;* and that, however it were with the taste of the Smythes, their judgment had, for once, been at fault.

"The Smythes lay down the law in education to *you ladies of the West*," said Miss Stronach, with vivacity; "but I imagine they would soon have their pretensions pulled to pieces in France or England. Conceive Maria Smythe schooling my sister on our style on the harp!"

"My goodness!" cried Mrs. Luke — who was shrewd enough, however, to perceive "the cat leap out of the bag," and sufficiently patriotic to resent the "*you ladies of the West*." Advanced as she was, the younger branches of the Stronachs had careered far before her. They seemed to despise the whole province, as commercial, and vulgar, manufacturing, and impracticable to the refinements and graces of life. They had little more reverence for the poor provincial gentry, than for the purse-proud *mercantiles*. Edinburgh itself, the very modern Athens, was despised, with all its architectural, literary, and aristocratic pride and splendour. Mrs. Mark Luke was overcome with amazement.

"What is Edinburgh, after all, but a provincial town, where the Scottish law courts sit," said Miss Stronach — "with all the formality, and more than the conceit of such

kind of places? Even *your* city of Glasgow, ma'am, is, in some respects, superior to that town of poor cousins, with its stiff professional air and ridiculous pretensions."

"Nay, the Edinburgh folk were aye upsetting enough," cried Mrs. Luke, who, though she usually affected to yield the palm to the City of Palaces, as a proof of her own refinement, was, as became her, at heart sound and unfaltering in her allegiance to her native district. Still she did not relish "your city of Glasgow," though Glasgow was a good place enough in its own way. In short, poor Mrs. Luke, vacillating between opinions and systems, did not, we apprehend, well know what she would be at; and the appearance of Mr. Robert Smythe, it is to be feared, would once more have turned the scale in favour of the *East-country*, had not Miss Stronach entered the lists for London, Bath, and Brighton, if people were condemned to live in Great Britain at all.

While dazzled and bewildered by these cross lights, and endeavouring to be of everybody's opinion on matters of such vast concernment to her, Mrs. Luke was startled by the sudden creaking of wheels on the gravel, and the exclamation of her daughter, who stood at a window amid a cluster of junior branches. "Mamma! Mamma! it's Mrs. Furnishins and a' the bairns in a cart, with straw and blankets! Oh! there is little Jenny laughing up to me;" and Mysie took French leave of the party, and rushed down to her former pew-mates, with whom she had sometimes contrived to have a little sly play in even sermon time. Mrs. Luke's ears rung—her skin tingled—her heart failed; she was truly "in a sad taking." Bob Pirgivie was nothing to this. A tailor's wife and all her brats! Furnishins, too, the well-known tailor of the Trongate—a name that would not hide, although Miss Luke had not proclaimed it—for which involuntary crime of poor Mysie, birch have mercy upon her!

The ladies were too well-bred to see, hear, or understand, while their agonized hostess became all manner of colours; her complexion varying, like the shades of her mind, to pale, sanguine, black, and blue. She was, however, a woman of considerable spirit, presence of mind, and resource. Desperate cases require desperate remedies; and she screamed out, "Oh, Mr. Robert Smythe, for the love of goodness, stop my daughter—she is rushing upon contagion!" Mr Smythe flew gallantly to the rescue of the young heiress presumptive; and the mother followed, and was followed in turn by Miss Jean Sprot, muttering, "Such impidence in Furnishins, the tailor's wife, to come to see aunty when she has genteel company!"

"Robina! Miss Luke!" screamed the mother, louder than before. "For heaven's sake, Mr. Smythe, shut the hall door in the face of those people."

"Good-day, mem!" cried Mrs. Furnishins, now fairly alighted on her feet. "Siccan a paradise as ye have got here, Mrs. Luke! We have been at the saut-water for a week back; and I just thought, as ye pressed us the last time I met ye in the kirk, the bairns and me would hire a cart, and drive up the coast, and take an airing and our four-hours wi' Miss Mysie and Mrs. Luke, and see that wonderfu' Halshie Bank we have a' heard so much o'."

"For all the sakes on earth, go away, woman, or I shall die on the spot!" exclaimed Mrs. Luke, keeping Mrs. Furnishins at arms-length. "You have hooping-cough among you, I hear. My precious child!" And now she seized Miss Mysie, who had flung off Mr. Robert Smythe, and gave her a tolerably smart admonitory pinch—"Here, gardener, do drive this load of pestilence from my door. How could you, woman, be so thoughtless—was there not the back entrance?"—And with this the glass door was fairly slammed in the face of the inconsiderate visitant, who remounted her car with her progeny, muttering mischief and vengeance, and "Woman, indeed! Wha does she woman!—Set her up!"

"Was there ever such impidence!" again ejaculated Miss Sprot. It was the first sensible or acceptable word her aunt had heard her speak that day, and the very first she addressed to her was, "Take Robina up stairs, Jean,"—and as, leaning on the supporting arm of Mr. Smythe, she came within ear-shot of the drawing-room, she said more audibly—"and change her clothes and fumigate her well—nor dare either of you to enter the drawing-room this evening. Such a fright I have got!—Oh, ladies, such a catastrophe! I have to beg ten thousand pardons. But, I trust in mercy, Miss Flora Stronach has had the chincough?"

The tittering Miss Stronachs had gone out into the balcony to "enjoy the prospect before the house," a literal fact, which Mrs. Luke could not doubt. They came in, trying, with more politeness than success, to compose their features. "We shall be sorry if we have frightened away your *friends*,

ma'am," said Miss Stronach. "All my sisters have had hooping-cough. I was seized myself at Versailles when at school."

"That person is the wife of one of Mr. Luke's tenants in Glasgow," observed Mrs. Mark Luke, with recovered dignity—"decent, substantial people in their way; but not particularly well acquainted, as you may perceive, with the usages of society. In the country, of a morning, one is bound to receive every body; but one's evenings should, surely, be one's own. Even you, ladies, could, I dare say, have forgiven the ignorance of the poor woman, with her ill-timed visit; but to bring infection to my house is utterly unpardonable."

The most practised individual present had reason to admire the dexterity with which Mrs. Luke had manœuvred; and that, without driving matters to a very preposterous length, or outraging all probability by her inventions, she had got tolerably well out of the scrape. Tea appeared as a relief. The previous coffee Miss Stronach had pronounced equal in *strength* to Madame Didot's:—in *flavour*——but it was idle in Scotland to desire impossibilities.

The qualifications of that lady as an instructress, now formed the theme of Mrs. Stronach. Her daughters joined in the chorus of praise to their last teacher—the last of many. Madame Didot, who had *finished* them, and still corresponded with them, was an Englishwoman by birth—and hence her exalted state in morals and in the Protestant religion; but a Frenchwoman by marriage and residence—and hence all that was admirable and enviable in manners and personal accomplishments. Miss Stronach read a few extracts from her letters.

In the meanwhile, the Laird of Hawgreen came up stairs with his cousin, the baronet. The landed interest appeared disposed to stand by their order at one end of the room, while the commercial and fashionable section took their station at another. Mrs. Mark Luke vibrated between them, so ill at ease, what with the frigid *hauteur* of the landless laird, the insolent nonchalance of the titled man, and the saucy or defying airs of the Stronachs, that she almost rejoiced when Hawgreen gave his daughters the word to move. In the meantime, the mirth and fun in the dining room below was growing "fast and furious," under the combined influences of Bob Pirgivie's *chansons à boire*, and his thrice replenished bowl. Mr. Robert Smythe, listening to those sounds of conviviality, almost wished, albeit their vulgarity, that his retreat had been less precipitate, especially as Hawgreen stiffly declined his offered escort to the ladies. Mrs. Luke and Mrs. Stronach were overcome with surprise at the Hawgreen ladies proposing to walk home,—a plan so full of danger and difficulty in a July evening of uncommon beauty! The ladies pleaded the beauty of the weather, the delightful path, lying for a mile or two along the shore, or through plantations, and commanding, at so many openings, enchanting views of the airy, expansive Firth of Clyde and its islands, with the sweeping sky-line of the mountains of Arran and Argyleshire, and its indented or deeply-embayed coast. Mrs. Mark looked from the balcony of her marine villa, over sea and land, with the pride of a proprietress, and not without some feeling of the natural beauty of the prospect, and began to guess that it may sometimes be quite as genteel to walk two miles, as to go in the gig, particularly in a lovely summer evening.

And now the rural ladies were shawled and shod, and fairly under weigh on the lawn, while she curtseyed her third leave-taking from above, not quite satisfied as to the point of etiquette of descending to the hall with the landed interest, and thus seeming to neglect the guests of the other order, who were equally tenacious of privilege, and far more exacting in attention. She compounded by her appearance on the balcony; and well it was that she was unaccompanied.

"What vulgar family is that above, Sir Ogilvy, with the mother in the blue gown?" Hawgreen was heard to inquire.

Vulgar family! blue gown!—there was but one such dress in the party—Mrs. Stronach's lovely Lyons figured satin. Such impudence! thought Mrs. Mark Luke. "There is no getting the better of the beggar-pride of the gentles—Mr. Stronach, that could buy him, and sell him, and all his generation!—Set him up!"

While Hawgreen buttoned up his coat, and the ladies stepped on, there was leisure for a few more observations.

"What heraldic monstrosity have we got here, Sir Ogilvy?" This was said in reference to a lobby chair blazoned with the presumed armorial bearings of Mr. Mark Luke; which, having been lifted out to aid the unlucky descent of Mrs. Furnishins from her cart, still remained on the gravel. Sir Ogilvy, not wholly unconscious, perhaps, that there was an observer overhead, deliberately examined the extraordinary monsters

through his eye-glass, and burst into an immoderate fit of laughter.

"This is a matter for the *surveillance* of the Lyon King," he said, at last. "Such a confounding of all the laws, principles, and rules of heraldry amounts to nothing less than misprision of treason against his sovereignty. Have persons bearing the appellation of Luke arms at all, or any title to bear them?—Allow me to help you with that button, Hawgreen——"

"Very good arms, with clutching, scrambling-up sort of fingers at the end of them; of more account in Scotland, in these times, Sir Ogilvy, than any obtained by grace of William the Lion himself." The gentlemen proceeded arm in arm; the mortified Mrs. Luke heard no more, and retreated from the balcony with a heightened complexion and as much dignity and composure as she could summon up.

The ladies now fell into closer ranks, and engaged in a serious discussion upon education, manners, taste, fashion, and fashionables, and the cosmetic discipline; ending with a parallel between Mrs. Smythe and Madame Didot, not exactly in the manner of Plutarch, but sufficient to convince Mrs. Luke that her daughter would be ruined for ever unless she was finished at the Boulogne seminary. Mrs. Stronach, therefore, agreed to support her in *attacking* Mr. Mark Luke upon the absolute necessity of expatriating his only child for several years, and those the most important of her life.

In the meanwhile, in expectation of the gentlemen, coffee was hot and coffee was cold a half-dozen times. No fresh man came, and Mr. Robert Smythe had stolen away. There was not a single gentleman left to mount guard upon the piano-forte, or to listen to the tinkling of the guitar, which, at the earnest request of Mrs. Luke, had been brought by the Stronachs in their vehicle. Their mother began a discourse on temperance, or rather on the vulgarity of deep and long-continued potations, and instituted another comparison between East-country and West-country manners. Hard drinking and the abandonment of the Graces were, according to Mrs. Stronach, disappearing entirely in the upper regions. A better style had descended even the length of Edinburgh, where, in families of the best fashion, very little wine was drunk by the young men, and no punch.

"There may be reasons for that, ma'am," observed Mrs. Mark—"Wine is a heavy *eatem* in a pinched income. The ladies of Edinburgh, I hear, are mighty admirers of such gentlemen as spare the *garde de vin*. There's a great deal of outside work in certain quarters, I am given to understand. Thank our stars, though Mr. Luke is no glass-breaker, he can both afford to give his friends a bottle of claret, and has the heart to make them welcome to it. They do seem to be enjoying themselves down stairs."

Mrs. Mark rejoiced to think that so much good wine and old Jamaica rum was in course of consumption at her entertainment. Refining into mere shadows and vapour was not at all to her substantial taste, ambitious of elegance as she was become.

The rich and glowing July evening deepened into that witching hour—

'Tween the gloamin and the mirk—

so soothing to sense, and so promotive of reverie. The blackbirds flitted about in the dew-besprent shrubberies of Halcyon Bank, uttering those jets and gushes of song in which they delight at eventide; and while Bailie Pirgivie, and his friend, Mark, chirruped "Auld Langsyne" below, odours of rum-punch and eglantine, of tobacco and bean-blossom, came blended on the breeze, floating upwards to the ladies leaning in the balcony, and looking sentimentally over the shimmering sea. The gentle ripple of the tide, as wave after wave kissed the pebbled strand and died away, was listened to in the pauses of the reiterated "*Hip! hip! hip! hurra!*" poured from the obstreperous throats of the compotators, and in especial as the glasses rung to the health of the young heiress of Halcyon Bank!

"I'll underwrite her for £30,000, and no' hurt her mother's settlement.—D'ye hear that, Bob, my boy?" said Bailie Pirgivie, now "pretty well on," freely slapping the accomplished Mr. Robert Symthe—at least so Mrs. Mark hoped and believed, though she had rather raised her views for Robina, on the present afternoon. Edinburgh had fallen in her scale in nearly the same proportion as the *Belle Retiro* School. Mrs. Stronach pricked up her matronly ears. She had four daughters; but she had also a Bob, and a John, and a James, and a few more of the same kind, still unbearded; and she fancied it enough that the Edinburgh barristers drained the pockets of the Western magnets in law-suits, without stealing their heiresses. Her manner to her new friend, Mrs. Luke, became more cordial—her interest more lively in Miss Luke enjoying the same advantages

of education as her own daughters, under the care of Madame Didot.

While the mothers conferred in low confidential tones, the young ladies were humming songs, waltzing with each other, and, in short, if such a thing durst be surmised of the pupils of Madame Didot, laughing loudly, and romping in a very natural manner. Twilight, like undress, wears off restraint; and nature will, at some time or other, vindicate her own rights—ay, in spite of all the six months' educational systems in the world. She did so now in the natural movements of mind and body of these young women; who, released from the task-work of exhibition, and none of the other sex being present to excite their vanity and coquetry, had forgotten the assumed part, and relapsed into something as agreeable as the freshness of youth and youthful spirits, when allowed fair play, will generally make at least nineteen girls out of every twenty. In the midst of their gaiety, a bustle and an opening of doors and windows was heard below, which, on the instant, drove them back within the intrenchments of affectation and artificial manners. The gentlemen were assuredly coming at last.

"Gi'e him air! gi'e him air, for the Lord's sake!" was the exclamation of Bailie Pirgivie. "Unloose his cravat. Oh, Mark Luke—my auld comrade! my trusty friend! is this to be the end o't? Cast down frae the very dizzy pinnacle of warldly prosperity! Och, sirs, but we are frail creatures—tak' awa' that fu' bowl, lass—erring mortals at the best."

Natural feeling was no more extinguished in the bosom of Mrs. Luke, than utterly sophisticated in the hearts of the Miss Stronachs. We shall, however, pass over her grief for the sudden loss of her rich husband, which was sufficiently conspicuous, as Miss Parlane and Miss Bogle afterwards alleged, in the triple breadth of her mourning hems, and the profound depth of her sables.

In short, Mrs. Mark Luke set into her widowhood with that good wet grief which affords a rational hope to surrounding friends of speedy comfort. It was now she had full time to ruminate upon the ominous change of manners which Mr. Luke had exhibited while his fate, in the last three days, was upon him. There had, indeed, been more in it than she had surmised; and her indignation was extreme, to find that not Mr. Ewins alone, but Bailie Pirgivie, and her old mother-in-law, were associated with herself in the guardianship of her daughter, by a will dated only two days before his death. Into the minute particulars of that will, neither Miss Parlane nor Miss Bogle were able, at this stage, to dive; but this was so far good, as it afforded the wider scope for conjecture.

"I can get no satisfaction out o' auld Luckie Luke," said Miss Betty, who had been out as a scout as far as Balmanno Street, one day. "She's a close, preceese kind o' body; only 'Her *dear* son was aye a sensible man, and had made, nae doubt, a judicious settlement.' She is well provided for, and there's something to the Sprots, and a thirty pounds a-year, for three years, to help to keep James Wilson at the College, if he incline. Mark Luke might have made it the even hunder, I think. As for the great Madam herself, there is no telling her power over the gear, or what she is to have; but I wish she may do justice to the bit lassie, her daughter."

"Ay, Miss Bogle," said her friend, laughing; "and wha do ye think Bauby is like to ware her widowhood upon? But ye are but lame and behind in your news, Mem. Mark *has* made a settlement that will please the auld leddy o' Balmanno Street better than the mistress o' Halshie Bank, as I can understand. However, that had not just spunked out at first, and down goes Madam Smythe, as a friend of the family no less, in a post-chaise, to bring away Mrs. Luke and her daughter from the scene of their woes, up to the *Belle Retiro* school, till after the burial—for that, it seems, is all the fashion now—and got the hire to pay for her pains; for Bauby, in truth, 'was ower sick and sorrowful to see strangers, and could not part with her dear daughter.' There was a change o' market days, I trow, Mem! The Smythes have room enough to spare in their Establishment, as they call it, now, for both Mrs. Luke and Miss Mysie.—But was it no' a judgment-like thing to see Mark Luke strucken down, as if by a visible hand, at that Belshazzar Feast of theirs?—But it's no' the greatest sinner that is aye first called to account."

"And that's as true," returned Miss Bogle; "it was evident there was something before that family. Even Mark himself, though a douce sensible man, was exalting his horn. Hech, sirs! to see a house-heating turned into a dregy! If Bauby Peaston has any sense of decency or religion about her, she will rather lay the judgment to heart than be raising marble monuments with rhymes on them to her gudeman's memory,

keeping a' Glasgow laughing at them baith."

"His memory! It's little ye ken about it. They tell me, that *should ken*, that she was near tearing Bailie Pirgivie's een out when the Will came to be read. As Mark was neither at kirk nor market after the testament was made, and the forty-and-one days not out, it's thought it winna stand by the auld statute laws of Scotland; so the widow—and weel it sets her!—has consulted Bob Smythe, the Edinboro' advocate, upon it; and is advised to raise a plea with Mysie's other guardians, Mr. Ewins and Bailie Pirgivie, to reduce Mark's settlement, and come in for the widow's tierce, which would make her a prize yet to some needy vagabond in foreign parts, that could blaw in her lug, and pretend to make a lady o' her."

Beyond the quality of her crape and bombazeen, and the freshness of her complexion, which bore testimony to the old adage employed on the occasion by Miss Parlane, of "A fat sorrow being a gude sorrow," nothing transpired for three months, which could afford the spinsters and their industrious circle any exact information as to the ultimate views of Mrs. Mark Luke. At the end of that period the beautiful Marine Villa, and the Goodwill of that long-established shop in the Trongate, were advertised—Apply to Bailie Pirgivie.—One Concern.

Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Luke and her daughter went to France, under the escort of Mr. Charles Stronach. It was impossible to mould an immediate marriage out of this journey.

"I can make nothing more of it," said the discomfited Miss Bogle, when the friends next compared notes; "though she gives herself airs as if she were Lady Ogilvy Fletcher already."

"Lady Ogilvy Fletcher!—No, no:—ne'er-do-weel dyvour as he is, he has not fallen just that far," exclaimed Miss Parlane, who, as a fourth cousin of the house of Hawgreen, had more correct ideas of aristocratic feeling than her friend, whose connexions were wholly gutter-blood.

"What was she after, then?—No house in Glasgow good enough for her to put up in but the George, the three days she staid, driving about leave-taking. I'm glad she did not darken my door, as I do not think I could have observed discretion to such a woman.——But there will be news of Bauby Peaston yet, or I'm mistaken." And the sagacity of our spinster was not at fault. There was news "of her;" but that must be reserved for another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

High and low, east and west, Mrs. Luke had vowed a residence of four years upon the Continent to *finish* Robina, and she heroically devoted herself to the same length of exile. Poor lady, she little guessed what she so rashly undertook. It was with great difficulty she obtained the consent of the other guardians to take her daughter abroad; but Mr. Ewins first yielded to importunity, and, next, Bob Pirgivie, whose peculiar department was looking after the pecuniary concerns of the heiress.

For two years there was much less intelligence of the travellers than their female friends at home could have wished. During this period, Mrs. Mark Luke had remained near her daughter—at Boulogne, at Versailles, at Tours, and latterly in Paris. Sometimes she was really seen by persons from the west of Scotland; but, much more frequently, Mrs. Luke was imagined to have been met with under very extraordinary circumstances. Her marriage was reported in her native circles at least once in every three months.

In the meantime, old Mrs. Luke died one afternoon, and had her repositories effectually ransacked by her attendant gossips—our now venerable, but still active spinsters of the Trongate. Several letters were found addressed by Mysie to her "dear grandmother," which threw some faint light upon the motions of the absentees. The first was dated Boulogne. We shall give but one extract:—"After unpacking our trunks to get out our new London mourning, we dressed, and drove out to the *chateau*, which means a castle, but not one like Dumbarton, nor Inverary, nor yet Loudon, or Cassillis House, I was so afraid—and so was mamma herself a little—to meet this grand Madame Didot we had heard so much about! But, dear grannie, only guess who she was! I give you and Grizzy, your lass, nine guesses. Who but our own old Miss Dedham, become very like a painted French lady! Mamma found her out at once; and so did I, and was very glad to see her; but she could not recollect us at first at all, nor speak any English to us. Mamma was so mad at the Stronachs for sending us to her! But, dear grannie, you must not say one word of this

to Miss Parlane or Miss Betty Bogle — for mamma says they are such horrid, vulgar gossips; and she does not wish any one, not even the Stronachs, to know that Madame Didot was formerly the Smythes' nursery-governess, and ours, as it might hurt their feelings."

"The impertinent little cuttie! — like mother like dochter!" exclaimed Miss Parlane. "Miss Betty Bogle, indeed! But go on, mem — fine doings, truly!"

"Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, who is here, and many other grand gentlefolks, told mamma that Mons. Didot (Mons. means Mr.) was formerly his *valet de place* at Paris. You don't know what that is; but it is very like a flunkie with you. I have already been at three different schools here, and mamma in five French boarding-houses. Though there is very genteel society, and many officer gentlemen and their ladies in them, mamma does so long for a comfortable house of her own again! There is no breakfast, and no comfort, mamma says, and she hates French gibberish. The weather is terribly cold, and no carpets or good fires, and very ugly dining-rooms. I have had chilblains all winter; and yesterday, when I went to visit mamma, her face was swelled, and her nose so blue. 'O Mysie,' says she, I wish we were within twenty miles of the Monkland Canal, and we should have one rousing coal fire.' Dear Grannie, I wish that too — for then I would see you."

Miss Bogle kept silent so long as the relation of foreign grievances proceeded; but when the reader ceased, she also burst out — "Impertinent little gipsy, indeed, mem! 'Gossips,' quoth she! My truly, I'm mistaken if both mother and dochter do not give the world plenty room for gossip. But what are ye come to next?"

"I'm glad these papers of our friend, that's gone to a better place, has fallen into friendly hands like yours. These letters are not just for the eye of the fremmit, I'm jalousing."

The next letter, some years later, was dated Versailles. In it, "dear grannie" was informed — "Mamma took me away in great haste from Mademoiselle Seraphine's school. One day mamma gave a grand party. Sir Ogilvy was there, and several English gentlemen and ladies, with Mademoiselle and myself, and two of the boarders whose grandfather was a Count — that is like a lord with you. Well, next morning, one of the gentlemen sent mamma a very polite letter, saying Mademoiselle had been an opera-dancer, and he remembered her as such at Lyons, — that is, a playactress, and a very naughty woman. My mother was so shocked, and cried her eyes out, and talked of coming home from such wicked people, if Miss Parlane and the Glasgow gossips would not laugh at us. So off we came here. I liked that school very well myself. Mademoiselle was very good-natured, and a beautiful dancer, and did not wish to make the young ladies Papists, like the cross old governess in another school I was at.

"Mamma took me from the school before that, because the pupils got nothing but cold French beans to breakfast, and sometimes a cup of chiccory, which is something very like the coffee you give Girzy, for her breakfast, after you are done yourself, and pour more water upon the grounds for her. It is not so nice, to be sure, as Hawkie's milk, which I got at Halcyon Bank, but it is very well. Mamma talks of the Bank to our friends here very often; and there is a tall gentleman, whom we knew at Boulogne, who wishes to buy it from her at any price; but I hope mamma won't give it to him, as it was my father's place; and I heard Bailie Pirgivie one day say it was mine, as I was an heiress."

"My word!" cried Miss Bogle, when the epistle was at this stage; "but Mysie Luke is mother's dochter! She's a sharp miss. Ye'll see a stramash about the gear yet. But go on, mem."

"The tall gentleman is called Colonel Rigby Blake; and he is either an Englishman or an Irishman, and not our countryman. He is very attentive to mamma when she walks out, and interprets for her, and counts French money, which is not like our money; but I cannot say I like him, he stares so terribly. He teaches mamma and some other ladies short whist; and me tricks on the cards, when I visit my mother. Short whist is something like *Catch Honours*, which mamma used to play at long ago, but more genteel; for people lose more money by it. Dear grannie, do you remember when James Wilson and I used to play at *birky* upon your *whamled* mahogany tea-board in dear Glasgow? You see I do not forget my Scotch — mamma calls it my Doric, which is a Greek tongue; and I don't think she is so angry at my vulgar words now, as she used to be at home. We heard from Mr. Ewins that James Wilson is learning to be a doctor at Edinburgh College, that he may get a

post in India; but he should not go there, for my geography says, the climate is so hot that people get sick and die. Perhaps you will tell him that, grannie, when he calls for you."

We cannot longer follow the juvenilities of this epistle; the most important part of which was a marginal note, in the sturdy, stumpy, hand-writing of Bailie Pirgivie, which Miss Parlane immediately identified:—"N.B. *To let Mounseer Colonel Rigby Blake two words into the mystery*, which will requite him for his instruction of my ward in tricks on the cards."

"The mystery, Miss Bogle! *What can it be?* There is something under this colonel I cannot fathom!"

"Colonel, Miss Betty! Just such a colonel, I dare say, as the chield was, they called a captain in the cutter, whom Mrs. Luke had the impudence to introduce to my cousins, the Hawgreens, as a navy officer, at their grand banquet some years since, though he turned out nothing better than a kind of saut-water gauger, and has last week married Nelly Stronach."

"But no' slighted Miss Isabella o' Hawgreen I hope," said the other, with a gentle sneer; "young ladies of family cannot aye afford to be so nice nowadays as wealthy merchants' dochters:—but here's a parcel more of Miss Luke's letters in this drawer, tied up with a black ribbon. The date is only last year. It is marked *private*, too—what can they be about? It may be no' just fair to read them, Miss Penny."

"No' just fair! What does the woman mean? Do you think that I, or my father's bairn, would do a dirty thing, as if we were come o' huxtery folk?" This was meant for a hard hit. "To be sure, there is no written testament found yet, authorizing us to act, so far as we have rummaged; but were not her last words to me, said in your hearing, mem, 'Tak hame the six Apostle spoons and the siller posset-pot,' Miss Penny, upon my blessing; and letna Jean Sprot get her lang fingers ower them—are they no' a' for my dear son's bairn, my darlin' Mysie?' Is not that a legal warrandice to search for papers, given by word of mouth, if not by deed o' settlement under hand and seal?"

"Certainly, mem," returned the less instructed Miss Bogle; and she continued—"I have heard of the Apostle spoons and the posset-pot, and should like weel to see them. It is said they have been amang the Lukes since the spulyieing o' Blantyre Priory in the Reformation times, when their namely forbear—a Mark Luke, too—commonly called the *Monk's Miller*, helped himsel'.—And they are all for Miss Mysie? Well, them that ha'e muckle aye get mair—'a body creeshes the fat sow's tail,' as the vulgar by-word gangs; but I aye thought the posset-pot was to be yours, mem, for like a compliment and memorandum."

Miss Penny was all unheeding even this disappointment of her reasonable expectations. She had poked into a secret drawer of the old-fashioned escrutoire, and found a voluminous letter, nor yet very old in date, and that date Paris. She read a few lines, and the skinny fingers of the self-appointed executrix trembled with eagerness; the spectacles vibrated upon her sharp and semi-transparent nose. It commenced thus:—

"My dearest grandmother—I have such a story to tell you! But you must not speak one word about it to any body in the world, save Bailie Pirgivie; and send for him and tell him as fast as ever you can. But pray don't tell your lass, Girzy—for I know you love to chat with her—nor cousin Jean, nor any body, lest it come to the ears of those spiteful old witches in the Trongate, who rejoice so to get anything against poor mamma." "Wha can the young cutty mean?" cried the indignant reader, laying the epistle on her lap. "Let me see:—there's Miss Jenny Catanach, in the Trongate, and Miss Christy Cammell, and Miss Rachel Rattray, and Mrs. Saunders, the widow——"

"We'll reserve that point, if ye please, mem," rejoined Miss Bogle, drily. "It's no doubt some one of those respectable ladies that's meant. Fine manners, upon my word, young ladies learn in France! Spiteful auld witches! the misleared little limmer! But Mysie Luke will turn out Bauby Peaston's daughter; and that ye'll see, Miss Penny, if ye live lang—and say then I said it. But go on, mem."

"Go on!—my certy, here is a going-on!—Bauby Peaston has *kythed* at last," she said, skimming over the pages, as if keeping a look-out for breakers a-head, and desirous not to run foul of them in the dark a second time. Her gray-green eyes twinkled with mirthful malice. "It's surely something unco gude that ye keep it all to yourself, Miss Penny," said her companion pettishly; but a quick, creaking footfall was heard—and, puffing, Bob Pirgivie—now, like

Hamlet, become "fat and scant of breath"—suddenly opened the door and fairly caught both ladies in the manner.

"Ye needna lay wyte on me, Bailie Pirgivie," whimpered the serving-maid of the deceased, following him into the room, her apron at her eyes: "I sent the lassie to warn ye the blessed minute the breath gaed out of my auld mistress's body. I wat she had nae sair warsle—she slipped away like the bairn fa'ing asleep at the mother's breast; and was scarce decently streeked when Miss Bogle, there where she sits, riped her pouch, that aye lay below her bowster through her lang sickness, for the keys, and opened the 'scrutoire, let me do or say——"

"Me! ye audaucious quean! I refer to Miss Parlane there——"

"Never mind, ladies," said the Bailie, coolly whipping up the letters scattered about—"ye wanted to help me in sealing up Mrs. Luke senior's effects, I make no doubt—so let us set about it. I'll thank ye for that paper you are sitting upon, by accident, Miss Betty."

"And is there such a person as Mrs. Luke junior, in the world, Bailie, any longer?" inquired the best informed, though still but half informed, Miss Parlane.

"Oh, fie, ladies! ye would not have Mrs. Luke get two husbands for her ain share, before other honest lasses like you get ane ava," said the facetious bachelor. Devoted as both the spinsters were to showing a decent respect to the memory and remains of their ancient friend, abandoned in her age by her own flesh and blood, they resented his ill-breeding so far, that he was obliged to make humble apologies before they would agree to attend the *chesting*, as the doleful and humiliating ceremony of placing the corpse in the coffin is named. They were, however, somewhat conciliated by being legally constituted interim custodiers of the posset-pot and the Apostle spoons, and promised a keepsake when the spoils were divided upon the return of the Lukes.

The glimpse which one lady had obtained of the wanderings, and aberrations of the heart of Mrs. Mark Luke, had only served to whet the curiosity of both. Miss Bogle, who was still strong, and always the more active of the two, wore out three pairs of heel-taps in this "Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties." Once the scent lay very strong after a young woman, the daughter of a lodging-house landlady at Largs, who had gone to France as the waiting-maid of Mrs. Gengebre, and had in this capacity crossed Mrs. and Miss Luke several times, both on the Continent, at Cheltenham, and in London. But just as she was heard of, and matters put in fair train, the foolish girl, upon one-half day's courting, married an American sailor, and went off with him to Greenock, unmindful of the tea to which Miss Parlane had condescended to invite her—nominally, in respect of her mother having been a nurse in the Hawgreen family, but, in reality, on account of her superior continental intelligence.

If so simple a relation of the adventures of Mrs. Luke, as that which we have power to give, would have satisfied her former friends and acquaintances, it might have been obtained with much less trouble than the vague and contradictory account gathered by Miss Parlane and Miss Bogle, though, haply, much less romantic and extraordinary.

Mrs. Luke had, in fact, conceived herself exceedingly ill-used by her husband's settlement; but she prudently, and upon reflection, wished the affair kept altogether as quiet as possible. She was, at the same time, seized with one of those fits of restlessness, or fidgeting, which is so frequently a symptom of the excitement consequent upon any total or important revolution in our social condition. One clause of Mark's testament, reducing her jointure from £500 to £200, contingent upon her marrying again, had excited her especial displeasure. It was an outrage to her conjugal affection, an insult to her delicacy and prudence, matronly dignity, and maternal tenderness.

"I cannot surely be suspected of having counselled any thing that must militate so directly against any sma' hope I might, at the end of year-and-day, have decently ventured to indulge for mysclf," said the provoking Bailie Pirgivie, to the ten days' old widow, winking, at the same time, to his brother-executor, as she swept through the chamber in full sables, her cambric at her eyes, in the first burst of resentment at this Herodian clause. True, this *post-mortem* jealousy only doomed her, under a penalty, to the "vowed and dedicate" condition that she had voluntarily affirmed three times before the seals were broken, should be hers for life; but no merely mortal widow can endure such insulting impositions and restraints upon personal liberty, and in a point so important. "I warned Mark against this clause," whispered the Bailie to Mr. Ewins:—"Tie up a woman in her will,

and ye set her red-wude upon what 's forbidden—it's in the nature o' them, from Eve downwards—there will be nothing but marrying and giving in marriage in Mrs. Luke's head, from this hour forth, and it 's weel if she escape matrimonial mischief."

Mr. Pirgivie's logic was not wholly false. The new-made widow, to whom such ideas might not so early, or ever, have occurred, was haunted day and night by curiosity to know who, of all their unmarried acquaintance, her husband could possibly have had in his eye, when he subjected her, at her age, to such conditions. Could it be ——, or could it be ——? We must not give name to the showy images of a certain baronet, and a young advocate, which flitted, like members of the line of Banquo, across Mrs. Luke's fancy.

Not only was this yoke fixed upon her; but, after an insulting preamble, praising her many virtues as a wife, it was stated, that, as Mark's "dear spouse, Mrs. Barbara Peaston, otherwise Luke," was to enjoy sole and uncontrolled power over the whole fortune, effects, and heritages of her late brother, Robert Peaston, Esq. planter, St. Kitt's, it was considered unnecessary to give her power over any part of her husband's fortune, which was to accumulate during the minority of her daughter, under certain restrictions and conditions "hereinafter enumerated." In brief, Mr. Luke's will, honest man as he was, displayed something of the sordid jealousy of a narrow-minded individual, who was fully better acquainted with the value of money to himself in trade, than of its best uses for his daughter.

"Power over my brother's heritage! and that is just nothing!" exclaimed the indignant widow. "Well, I deserved this at Mark Luke's hands! The wife I made to him—and the thanks I have gotten!" And a weeping was heard.

"Pardon, ma—dame," cried Mr. Bob—"every page of the testament shows the great regard of our late friend for his 'dear and loving spouse;' and as you have sworn against marriage—which, however, at eight-and-forty, is rather a rash vow—£500 a-year, the liferent of Halcyon Bank, and all the furniture, is, permit me to say ——"

"No more about it, if you please, sir," interrupted the widow, hastily, but with dignity. "Thank God, nothing can deprive me of the approbation of my own conscience, and the affection of my dear child."—

That *rich*, independent child, was already become more important in her mother's eyes.

—"Or of a good liberal allowance for the board and education of the heiress," said Mr. Ewins, as a peace-maker; "my friend here will agree with me in that?"

"Beyond all peradventure," cried the hearty Pirgivie, the more readily, that he had previously been made to perceive that his friend's testament was so contrived as to endanger sowing the bitter seeds of envy and jealousy between the mother and her only child. "It must be an unreasonable sum that I'll think it my duty as a curator to object to."

This looked better; and Mrs. Luke was finally enabled to grumble to the tune of £1000 a-year, of which her frugal fellow-executor, the Bailie, assured her she might save one-half.

This was one point gained; but a greater difficulty remained. Her daughter, according to Mrs. Luke's ambitious wishes, must not only be educated abroad, but remain at such a distance as would leave the matrimonial disposition of the heiress entirely with her mother; and, as a commencement, a reluctant leave was obtained for one year to be passed at Boulogne, as has already been mentioned.

At the end of that period, and of another of double the length, Mr. Bob threatened to withhold the supplies, unless the absentees returned to Britain; but Mr. Ewins would not consent to this extreme measure, and the time wore on until the heiress had reached the critical age of sixteen.

During those probationary years, the path of Mrs. Mark Luke had not lain on primroses. A woman of a less resolute spirit would have succumbed long before. Some of her manifold mortifications on the Continent were of a kind which, though ludicrous, were too mean and humiliating to bear recital. Suffice it that Napoleon himself, with his family, (as it is now the fashion to call a general's staff,) never maintained a bitterer or more incessant skirmishing with Sir Hudson Lowe about household grievances, than did our Mrs. Luke with the ladies conducting the different *pensions* she had tried; regularly finding every one worse than another, until driven to the unavoidable conclusion, that, in her native country, now triply endeared by distance, she could have enjoyed more *real* comfort for £80 a-year, than in France for 3000 livres. The question of *real* comfort is, however, one upon which French

and English people never will agree; and, though a philosopher of the former nation has asserted that the only difference between one mode of living and another, and even between such extremes as Crockford's table and that of the parish work-house, is but three months, full three years had not convinced Mrs. Luke of this great dietetical fact, even to the limited extent of the difference existing between *comfort* at home, and good fashion abroad. The consequence was, that, though, with the fortitude of a martyr, she affirmed her satisfaction and delight with all she saw abroad to natives of her own country, she had, in reality, squabbled and higgled with, suspected and denounced, almost every foreigner with whom she had come into contact for three years, and was only becoming somewhat reconciled to the sinful, reprehensible, and strange habitudes of the country, when about to leave it.

At her first going to France, all was bewilderment and disappointment. Next came blame and abuse. The national religion was a crime, the language an offence, the cookery odious, the wooden fuel beggarly, the household management insufferable, and female morals deplorable indeed! There was no fathoming the iniquitous depths of their white and red paint, or the falsity of their dyed hair and wigs.

In short, Mrs. Mark Luke had taken abroad a notion, far from peculiar to her, that France is one vast hotel or watering-place, got up for the accommodation and amusement of the rich English, and maintained by, and for them; and that, such being the case, great ignorance and perverseness were displayed in the keepers not rendering their dwellings, tables, and usages, more consonant and agreeable to British tastes and customs. Even French laces, toys, silks, and perfumes, here where they might be freely and openly purchased, became deteriorated in her eyes, lacking the dear delights of a smuggle. Smelfungus could not be more discontented than was Mrs. Mark Luke, who secretly grumbled from Calais on to Tours, in her long pilgrimage in a country which knew not of the glories of Halcyon Bank; and openly railed over the same ground back again to Boulogne; nor did she ever discover how charming a land was that in which she had sojourned, until fairly settled in another.

And, during this long expatriation, what of the fashionable world had Mrs. Mark Luke not seen! Her vulgar husband, poor man! rich as he was, had gone to his grave in such total ignorance of *fashionable life*, that the marvel was how he could rest in it.

She had now got so far before the Smythes and Stronachs, that she became doubtful if the world of France had any thing more to show; and if she might not now sit down for the remainder of her days, reposing with dignity under the laurels of Halcyon Bank, and talking her neighbours into amazed silence with Paris and Versailles, "the Alps, the Appenine, and the river Po,"—Colonel Rigby Blake, the Count di Gambade, and Lady Di Corscaden, the daughter of an English Peer, and the widow of an Irish Baronet.

For her original introduction to this high society she was indebted to Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, whom she had had the good fortune to be "able to oblige" at Boulogne; and, perhaps, some little to the attraction of her tea parties, where *small* play was introduced—and to the convenience of trifling loans, frankly advanced, when English and Irish remittances proved less punctual than those regularly supplied to the day by Bailie Pirgivie.

This initiation certainly cost a few extra fees; but the grand principle of life is compensation. In giving teas, making small presents, lending occasional sums, and studying short whist under Colonel Rigby Blake and Lady Di Corscaden, the time had past as pleasantly at Boulogne, as French landladies and French-English housekeeping would permit, until a slight alarm was felt by cash running short, and so very much spent! Above £700 in one six months! and Miss Luke's *pension* in arrear! besides other debts. It was astonishing how the money could have all gone.

"If Mark Luke could look up from his grave," sighed Mrs. Mark, as, pensively seated before her desk, she gazed and pondered upon Lady Di's receipt for £45 lent, and another from Colonel Rigby Blake for a larger sum, the price of a handsome lady's pony he had had the good fortune to secure for Miss Luke, far under value, when his friend Sir Ogilvy went to Paris. A random thought did dart across Mrs. Luke's mind that the handsome pony was a dear enough purchase, small as was her skill in horse-flesh; and that there was just a bare possibility that the Colonel might have touched a little in his character of negotiator; but she dismissed the unworthy suspicion, as ungenerous towards so gentlemanly and good-looking a person, and one so politely attentive to unprotected women—so

marked, indeed, in his attentions to herself, that his friend, Lady Di, had rallied her upon it.

Bailie Pirgivie showed true masculine sagacity, when he prophesied that the prohibitory clause in Mark's will would put mischief into his widow's head.—Mrs. Colonel Rigby Blake! It did not sound amiss. But then the Colonel (we believe *Captain* was the home title) was Irish, on militia half-pay, and that forestalled, addicted to exchanging and buying racers and ponies, and to more formidable games than short whist. Mrs. Luke wanted not for shrewdness and observation. She knew the value of her present independent, unhusbanded condition; and, though vanity might betray her into a flagrant flirtation on an evening, a night of reflection was, at any time, sufficient to restore the habitual caution of her country, and to divide empire between ambition and prudence. Still she was but a woman—and a tied-up widow!

At the same hour that Mrs. Luke was musing, as above, over her paper securities, Colonel Rigby Blake had, as was his wont, carried *Galignani* and the *Dublin Evening Post* to Lady Di's lodgings.

"Your Ladyship did not honour Mrs. Luke's tay-table last night?" followed the compliments of the morning.

"No, indeed; I was lazy, and comforted myself with a *Colburn*, and nursed my megrim and Psyche.—My angel! keep down, will ye." Her Ladyship caressed her fat poodle. "I hope you spent a pleasant evening. Who rose victor?—but I need not ask that."

"You surely forget, Lady Di, that there were only school girls, besides Mademoiselle Seraphine, and an eternal dance," said the Colonel, reproachfully.

"So I did!" cried the lady, laughing; "and that you must, of course, dance attendance. Well, if gentlemen enjoy exclusive privileges, they must be content to suffer penalties too:—but I hope it won't be for nothing."

"Well, sariously now, Lady Di, I wish to take your opinion, this morning, of all mornings, about that same affair. You take me?"

"It is the Scots widow must take you," returned the lady, gaily breaking the ice.

"You're a wag any way, Lady Di, and always was, ma'am; but your opinion now, as a friend."

"Oh, she is as rich as a Jewess; and, for a Scots woman, not very——oh, I have met much worse-mannered, broader-brogued Scots ladies, and of high rank, too."

"For my own part, I think Mrs. Luke a rather clever, intelligent, and well-informed woman, like all the Scots."

"And so do I—vastly clever, and intelligent, and well-informed with a clear thousand a-year,—'one fair daughter and no more,' and she an heiress."

Colonel Blake's chops literally watered, while his eyes sparkled.

"Oh, d—n the thousand, if it were ten of them!—— What I look to, is a handsome, well-bred, presentable, good-tempered sort of dashing woman—a good gig figure—and one who keeps the step, as if to beat of drum."

"Nay, it is hopeless!" exclaimed the lady, throwing herself back in a convulsion of laughter, in which the gallant lover joined, more, however, from sympathy than approbation.—"I see you are over head and ears—furiously in love!—Ten thousand pardons, though, for my impertinence," she continued, recovering her position and gravity. "I am the giddiest, most inconsequent creature in the world; but, as I see you are really serious——"

"Sarious as life and death, Lady Di.——"

"I may assure you, that I entirely agree in your opinion of my friend, Mrs. Luke: she really is a charming woman, and the most obliging good creature, and so grateful for every small attention!"

"The girl is the only drawback; but, as she is provided for, and the mother has that thrifle of independent pin-money—— "

"Trifle, do you call it, Colonel Rigby Blake! Upon my honour, sir——"

"A thousand, your Ladyship named it: now I have heard that £500 is the outside of it."

"A clear thousand, I assure you; I have, indeed, seen Mrs. Luke receive her quarterly drafts; and there is some great West India fortune or other in expectation, or reversion, or something of that sort. I shall be so rejoiced to see my new friend, Mrs. Luke, 'gentle her condition,' and my old friend, Colonel Rigby, wive well. There is but one stipulation I must make——"

"Name it, my lady!" said the Colonel, rubbing his hands; too generous to object to a lady doing some little thing for herself, who had the power of effectually serving him. "Sure, what in life is the use of gold, but to purchase pleasure! and what pleasure

on earth so great as making a compliment to one's friends!"

Lady Di had been too long, during her husband's lifetime, in quarters in Ireland, not to know the exact Irish meaning of the word *compliment;* but, extravagant and thoughtless as she habitually was — ready to borrow on all hands, and rapacious at the card-table — she could not just make a cool bargain of her new friend, Mrs. Luke, though she was good-naturedly willing to help her older friend to a good match, which might have its conveniences to herself.

"Nay, I shall let you off *asy*," said she, apprehending all her advantage, and despising, without morally reprobating, the offer of the jackal's share of the prey to herself. — "My only stipulation is, that you make Mrs. Luke purchase that delight of a Swiss carriage which the Thorntons are going to dispose of. All the world has left Boulogne, and the rest of it is grown so stingy, that one can no more command a friend's carriage than maintain one; but Mrs. Luke, good soul, is so obliging, that hers, I am sure, would be a Diligence for the use of her friends."

"Say no more — it shall be done, my Lady — only put in a good word for your humble servant. Sure, my carriage — or my wife's carriage, which is the same thing —ought, in nature and duty, to be at the command of my late commanding officer's lady, by night or by day, fair weather or foul."

The words were not well said, when a note was brought, addressed by Mrs. Luke to Lady Di, which that lady perused with a look of pettish vexation, and handed to Colonel Rigby, saying — "You know this person asks what is quite impossible, Rigby; — here is the mischief of accepting of any obligation from those sort of *cent-per-cent* people. What can she be after by this quick march? — But it is just, I dare say, a pitiful excuse for dunning."

What could she be after, indeed?—places taken out for Paris, and for next morning! Colonel Rigby's basket of Galway eggs seemed fairly overset, long before the chickens were hatched; and he looked so comically perplexed, so mirthfully rueful, so perfectly *Irish*, as Lady Di said, that she was seized with another of those fits of laughter, which might have been fancied the height of rudeness in Mrs. Luke, or any lower-born woman, but which only became her.

But this was the time for action, not for reflection — and the Colonel took his hasty way to Mrs. Mark Luke's.

The widow was denied; but the Colonel, sending up his card, with a message that he came direct from Lady Di Corscaden, was finally admitted into the separate *parloir* retained by her. It was deserted at this moment; but, on a work-table, lay a letter just begun, with a few other scattered writings, and Mrs. Luke's private memorandum-book. Colonel Rigby Blake was a man of honour—every soldier is so, and he had been a soldier for thirty years—but he was also a man of liberal curiosity, especially where his *affections* were concerned; and his eye-glass dangled over the table, as he stooped, so opportunely and temptingly, that the words, as it were, seemed transcribed on his brain without the intervention of his visual faculties or their optical helps. The burning words were —"Dear Bailie Pirgivie, — We are on the wing for Paris, where I must have an immediate credit for £300 this ensuing quarter — £50 to be deducted from the next payment; as, owing to some little advances, I have exceeded my usual quarterly allowance of £250—I say my allowance, not my *income;* for, I trust, so vigilant a steward as Mr. Pirgivie has a great deal to send me as arrears of the rent of Halcyon Bank and the grounds. As a friend of mine here, Lady Diana Corscaden, relict of Sir Dermot Corscaden, of Castle Corscaden, barony of Tirrykeeranvey, observed to me, the other night, 'The soil of France is a sponge for English gold — it swallows our guineas, and sends us up truffles instead.'"

At this point, a faint feminine rustle of silks was heard by the conscious ears of Colonel Rigby Blake, who, wheeling, whistling round, was caught by the fixed gray eye of a miniature painting on the chimney piece, which conscience whispered was that of his predecessor in that high place in the affections of Mrs. Mark Luke which he now ambitioned. The miniature was flanked on the right by one of Mrs. Mark Luke herself, in grand costume; and, on the left, by that of her daughter. Mrs. Luke was not, like some widows, ostentatious of her husband's miniature, but she had, this morning, placed it there when arranging her more precious luggage for her speedy decampment. The Colonel could just fix the devotion of his gaze upon the picture on the right, with a very respectable, though somewhat overblown attempt at a sigh, when the fair original stood before him!

Solomon has given a catalogue of mysteries which lay beyond the reach of his celebrated

wisdom and powers of penetration, as "The way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid." But we opine that the way of a gallant and experienced Irish officer of militia with a widow, well-jointured, might have equally set his royal sagacity at defiance. We, therefore, who are no Solomons, at once give it up. Suffice it that Mrs. Mark Luke, albeit the guardian miniature on the chimney-piece, was surprised in a not inauspicious mood:—a helpless, unprotected woman, in a strange land!—exceedingly shocked and alarmed at having just learned the suspicious character of the person with whom, on the recommendation of Lady Di, (who, by the way, not unjustly accused herself of being the giddiest creature in the world,) she had placed her daughter. She durst not affront her fashionable patroness, the friend of Colonel Rigby Blake, by complaining of the equivocal Mademoiselle Seraphine; and she was still so much under the influence of vulgar prejudice, as really to feel much of the horror which the Colonel, not unnaturally imagined might be in part exhibited to operate upon his gallantry and sensibility. Her own pride also was mortified at having committed so capital a mistake, which, she feared, might, through the envious Madame Didot, take wind, and even reach Glasgow; and she saw no safety but in instant flight to Paris. In this perplexing condition, the Colonel found Mrs. Mark Luke.

We are all beings of mixed motives and varying impulses; and though it is next to impossible that the distress of any unjointured Mrs. Luke in the whole world could have long or deeply affected the gallant soldier, her emotion and evident pleasure in seeing a hero by her side in this turn of evil fortune, were not without effect. The Colonel was the first person who had addressed her in her sorrow, in kindly English speech—or something as near it as a rich, genial, Galway brogue can attain. The Colonel became so much interested, that, had Mademoiselle Seraphine been of the fightable sex, he would at once have called her out. As it was, he heartily volunteered to be the military escort of his "Dear Mrs. Luke and her pretty little daughter," to Paris, or wherever they pleased; in the warmth of his temporary feelings, forgetting entirely the ways and means necessary to achieve so chivalrous an enterprise. But, "Let war support itself" was *his* maxim.

"'A friend in need is a friend indeed,'" replied Mrs. Luke, tearfully, to the frank, hearty offer, so gallantly tendered to a *lone* woman, in a strange land, with the precious charge of an heiress.

Mrs. Luke was, in short, at this crisis, "comforted marvellous much" by the address, politeness, and zealous friendship of Colonel Rigby Blake. She had never seen the superiority of military gentlemen, as advisers and protectors, in so conspicuous a light as at this trying juncture, and she vowed she never could forget it.

It was Colonel Rigby Blake who brought Mysie, and her goods and chattels, from the seminary of the screeching Mademoiselle Seraphine, *vi et armis*, and that with very little ceremony. It was Colonel Rigby Blake who forcibly beat down the jabbering lady-mistress of the *pension*, 500 franks of her extras, and who finally sold the beautiful lady's pony for £15, which he had so lately purchased for £55—but then there was no time to look about for a proper purchaser. The same haste, Mrs. Luke fancied, must have made him forget to give her even that £15; but all would be in good time when they got on the road.

Fairly on the way, Mrs. Luke seated between her daughter and her brave deliverer, felt quite serene and grateful under gentlemanly protection; yet it was very odd, too, that, stage after stage, when the Colonel, her purse in his hand, settled for them at the inns, he never once remembered the price of the pony, on which £40 had been lost in three months. It may seem as odd to the reader, that Mrs. Luke should have been musing upon the propriety of matrimony with a person who troubled her with such doubts, and whom, if in Scotland, and in her husband's lifetime, she would inevitably, in similar circumstances, have set down as a swindler. But, do we not every day see the advertisers for suitable partners for life, adding an N.B., "All letters to be post-paid"—twopence being too much to put in jeopardy if haply the negociation should not succeed; and in £15 there are many twopences.

Colonel Rigby Blake was no swindler, properly so called. Wealthy widows were his lawful prey; and, if he prevailed with himself to sacrifice his liberty, his free unhoused condition, all was in honour; and he would have fought any man who presumed to think, say, hint, or wink any thing else—hair-triggers, and across the table. It was, indeed, in his own estimation, no small condescension to prudence and creditors which

enabled him to waive strong personal objections in respect of age, family, and nation, and of his predecessor, the grocer.

But let the world say what it might, the gallant Colonel was ready to proceed to the altar with the honest and entire conviction that Fortune, in this unequal contest, had given Mrs. Luke greatly the advantage of him, and by far the best bargain, when it laid at her feet the five feet ten inches length of the gallant Denis Rigby, "lord of that presence, and no land beside." It is, therefore, unfair to set the Colonel down, as Bailie Pirgivie rashly did, the moment he had read Mysie's letter to her grandmother, as a swindling fortune-hunter, and rascally Irishman, who would, however, probably cease his devoirs the moment he knew how pecuniary matters stood; unless he was all a lie together, and the pittance remaining to the infatuated woman, if she should marry, an object to his necessity or cupidity.

In his opposition to her projected union, Mr. Bob Pirgivie was perfectly disinterested. He thought no more of Mrs. Luke for himself, than if she had been the eldest daughter of the Sultan — nor, indeed, of any of her kind; but he could not bear "that Bauby Peaston, his old friend, and the widow of his friend, Mark Luke, should make a fool of herself, and, perhaps, a wretch; vex little Mysie, and bring disgrace upon the *'sponsible* memory of the worthy grocer." The Bailie was troubled with restlessness and nightmare that whole night; which he set wholly down to the account of Colonel Rigby Blake, though some degree of the affliction might be fairly attributable to supping heartily on Glasgow tripe, to which favourite viand he had treated a certain Lieutenant Kennedy of his acquaintance, in order slily to fish among the veteran's Peninsular recollections for some trace of the hero in question.

The Lieutenant recollected Blakes of all degrees, among the *Connaught Rangers*, the *Kerry Boys*, the *Enniskillens*, and other regiments; but no Colonel Rigby of that name. Bob suspected there was no such *true* man; and hesitated whether he should set off on the top of the Carlisle mail next day, on his way to France, or try the effect of manœuvring, by an anonymous letter, *via* Hamburgh, sent through his correspondent there, to the gallant officer, filled with solemn warnings as to the real amount of Mrs. Luke's jointure, in the event of her second marriage.

"I wish to the pigs," soliloquized the Bailie, as, with some feeling of annoyance and self-mortification, he folded up this cunning epistle—"I wish to the pigs, Mark Luke had lived to look after his women-folk himself. It's hard that a peaceable man like me, who, for weel on to threescore years, have kept clear o' the kind, should get his hands full o' them when he is wearing up in life, and needing quiet and rest. It *is* hard to have the fash o' the sex, without ever knowing what the haverel poets call their 'angelic ministrations'—though in what these may preceesely consist"—— But here the sceptical Bailie pressed his seal energetically upon the wax, making a corresponding impressive face, and abruptly broke off his soliloquy. His initials, R. P., with his blazon of two hands cordially dove-tailed by ten fingers, stared upon him, and he burst into a laugh of the mixed mood.

"It's clear, nature never intended honest Bob Pirgivie for an anonymous letter writer. If the woman cannot be saved otherwise, she must e'en take her chance"—and saying this he jerked his elaborate epistle into the fire, and retired to consult his pillow.

In the meantime, afar off in Paris, Mrs. Mark Luke had first doubted — "but that not much"—whether it became her at forty-nine (she was determined to halt at forty-nine) to marry at all; next, whether Colonel Rigby Blake, to whom, however, she owed so very much, should *not* be the happy man; and, lastly and most important, whether it was strictly decorous, at her mature years, to assume the virgin costume of white and orange flowers, admitting, for a moment, that the above minor points were settled. Nature, or vanity, which satirists of the bearded sex pretend is, in woman, second nature, speedily solved the first doubt; the happy audacity of the gallant Galwayman—who practically knew

> That woman, born to be controlled,
> Stoops to the forward and the bold—

the second; while nature or vanity, again, through the lips of Madame Fontange, a Parisian priestess, who, in 1819, ministered to many "mi ladis," determined the third, entirely to the internal satisfaction of Mrs. Luke, by covering the white silk with Brussel's lace, and mingling *immortelles* with the wreaths of orange blossoms, though this floral admixture was, we fear, scarcely *comme il faut*, or classical.

Still Mrs. Mark Luke was troubled with doubts and misgivings. What would be

said in the Trongate to her marrying an Irishman? What would the Smythes think? What influence would her marriage have upon her daughter's prospects? Might not Mr. Ewins, who was *prejudiced* on some points, or Bailie Pirgivie, vulgar and obstinate upon all, object to Mysie remaining with her after her marriage, and thus a diminution of income accompany the loss of her daughter's society and guardianship? Ought she not to consult her fellow-executors, and represent to them the advantages which must result to their ward from the projected union? Still she could not get rid of the apprehension that they might not see the affair in the same light with herself, and procrastinated, like so many elderly, and also young ladies, until Destiny takes the form of a not unfavoured lover, and determines for them.

While in this state of suspense, one of those seemingly trifling incidents upon which sometimes so much depends, determined the question, and bent up each stubborn faculty to the terrible feat. Lady Di Corscaden arrived in Paris, settled in the same hotel, and fell into her former habits of intimacy with Mrs. Luke, whom, to all her friends, she laughingly declared to be the most obliging, good sort of useful creature she had ever known—one whose kindness it was impossible to weary out, tax it as one might.

Her ladyship enjoyed a tolerably extensive acquaintance among a certain class of the English and Irish in Paris, and did wonders for her friend in the way of introductions—which led to nothing. And why? Because Mrs. Mark Luke had no *status*. Mrs. Colonel Rigby Blake might, without the possibility of objection, appear at the parties of the ambassador's lady; but, in order to do so, she must first appear at the ambassador's chapel, and there obtain the requisite credentials; and this proud distinction itself was only to be obtained by the friendly offices of Lady Di, who had a near relation an *attaché* and a favourite with his Excellency. How would it read in the Glasgow newspapers some morning—"Married, at the Hotel of the British Ambassador, Paris"—or, at all events, "at the British Ambassador's chapel"—for it might run either way, though the first was preferable?

Every doubt vanished; and Lady Di herself volunteered to be present—with several military men among the English. As many of the French noblesse might be procured as the Colonel chose to select for a marriage garland, from among those he usually met in the mornings at the coffee-houses, and in the evenings at the theatres and gaming-tables.

The snowy robes and orange-flower chaplets were finally laid out in their freshness and beauty upon the bed, for next morning's happy consummation. Sempstresses and milliners were, in the meanwhile, continually sending in small parcels and very long bills, and the Colonel's remittances, through his Dublin agent, had come, as usual, so exceedingly tardily, and he had been so often, of late, ashamed of "bothering his dear Mrs. Luke for a few more gold pieces," that her tremours and *migraine* became serious; especially when she watched the tears silently stealing down the cheeks of her daughter on the preliminary morning.

Miss Luke had been brought to Paris from school, upon this joyous occasion. Her share of bridal finery was ample, and her mother, in purchasing a new watch for herself, (chosen by the Colonel,) had endeavoured to make the young girl happy with her old one and other trinkets. The young heiress, wounded at heart, resented this attempt at *bribing* her judgment and gaining her approval. Though the mother was unable to look with indifference upon the distress of her *only*, her affectionate and sensible child, she found it necessary to dissemble.

"Get yourself ready to go out, Robina, love; the Colonel and Lady Di will be here immediately to take us to the Garden of Plants. You know this party is made up chiefly for your gratification, as the Colonel has no partiality for Natural History. You shall afterwards dine with us and a small select party of friends at *Tortoni's*. This is an indulgence the Colonel has requested for *his* daughter—you know how very fond he has always been of you." Mysie sullenly hitched round her stool, and replied not. "You must get over your childish Scottish notions, Robina, and learn to treat the Colonel with becoming respect, as your papa—the husband of your mother."

Poor Mysie now sobbed outright, and covered her face with her hands.

"What *is* the matter, child? How can you behave so absurdly?" cried the really distressed bride.

"Oh! dear mother, don't ask me! but, indeed, indeed, I do wish I was at home again with my father's friends in Glasgow."

"Your father's friends in Glasgow! You poor-spirited creature!—with all I have done for you, to make a gentlewoman of you,

Miss Luke, and get you properly educated and introduced into society! And this is my thanks for all my cares and sacrifices, ungrateful girl as you are!"

"Mother, I am not ungrateful. I love you as much and more than I ever did, and that now makes me miserable and breaks my heart. When we were at home, you wont to say sometimes that I had an affectionate disposition."

"Show it now, then, my love, by proper conduct," said the mother, caressing her. "In the step I am about to take, your happiness, Robina, has been a first-rate object with me. To give you that *protection* and *status* in society which belongs to the daughter of Colonel Rigby Blake, to lift you out of the mire of *low*"——

"I am not the daughter of Colonel Rigby Blake," retorted the girl, with spirit and firmness that at once astonished and made her mother uneasy; and she rose and withdrew herself from her mother's arms—"I am my own poor father's child, and your child; but I do not like—I *hate*, and I owe no duty to Colonel Blake—I will never call him father!" Her eyes glowed with passion.

This was the *dourness* of the Luke race unexpectedly developed in a child, and in a very extraordinary manner. Mrs. Luke could scarcely believe her own eyes and ears. For the moment, she was effectually cowed; and a feather would, at this time, have turned the scale, if the daughter had known how to cast it in. But the docility and reverence of a child, and the habit of unquestioning submission, which had given way in a moment of passionate feeling, when the dawning spirit of the woman had flashed out, resumed their power; so poor Mysie began to cry; and the harder, though not the stronger, not the really firmer, temper of age regained its ascendency over inexperienced and affectionate docility.

"Beware, Robina, how you provoke me too far—remember I am still your mother. I might at this moment send you back to your school to learn your duty to me and to your future father"——

"He never shall be my father," said Mysie, now pettishly, and in a tone much less firm, and lower in *moral* pitch, than that which nature had so lately prompted her to adopt when singing the same tune. "Never, never—I *hate* him! and so do Lisette and all our young ladies that come here to visit with me."

The colour of the bride-elect deepened several shades through her rouge—*rouge*, we say; for, alas!—so much for Scottish frailty and Parisian immorality and temptation—Mrs. Mark Luke, under the open glaring example of Lady Di Corseaden, and some other British ladies, had become so utterly abandoned—so completely the thing that had once filled her with virtuous horror and indignation as—to use red paint!

"Lisette, child!" she faltered—"my fille de chambre?"——

"Yes, mamma!" and the young girl, blushing and trembling, the consciousness of the woman's feelings heightening the shamefacedness of the child, cast down her abashed eyes before her mother, while she said, with pettish affectation, meant to disguise those feelings—"He is so rude—always teasing *us*, and trying to salute *us*, as if *we* were babies!"—And Mysie pouted her lip, in resentment and offended delicacy—"We all hate him."

The girl's eye caught her mother's, and remained as if fascinated by the rapid and remarkable changes which the troubled countenance before her underwent. It revealed far more than poor Mysie had ever before dreamed of,—horror, jealousy, mortification, shame, and a hundred conflicting emotions, were momentarily visible in its workings.——A little more dignity in the persons and situation might have made the scene highly tragic. As it was, it bordered on the tragi-comic, if not on the ludicrous. All the blood had forsaken the face of the bride-elect, and her rouge was boldly outlined by the clammy livid white that seemed to surround it. Mysie became frightened at her mother's ghastly aspect, and sensible that she had done some deadly mischief.

"Dear mamma, are you ill?" she exclaimed, seizing her mother's hands. "Oh! how I wish we were at home!—You were always so well at Halcyon Bank. There were no Lady Di's to laugh at us there."——

"Laugh at me, child!"

"Yes, yes, mamma—ask Lisette."

"Lisette, again! You are a strange, bold girl, Robina. Get out of my presence, and prepare to return to school instantly. Instantly, I say!" And the lady stamped with her foot, probably unconscious of what she did, or why she thus acted.

"I shall any way be happier at school than seeing you make a fool of yourself, ma'am," cried Mysie, darting out of the room, and almost into the arms of her future

papa, who gallantly caught her and forced her back, while she struggled to be free. The discomposure of both ladies, and the excessive agitation of the elder one, proclaimed a recent fracas, and the Colonel fancied it most prudent to suffer the one to escape before he brought the other to confession. Even then he was not urgent for explanation, thinking it wisest to allow "the little tiff between mother and daughter to expend itself unnoticed."

In a half-hour, Mrs. Luke, more composed in her spirits, sought her daughter, whom she found in tears.

"Robina," she said, "on the solicitation of Colonel Blake, I am ready to forgive your extraordinary and undutiful conduct and language of this morning. Prepare to attend me;" and, as Mysie looked latent rebellion, she added, in a louder tone, "Upon your duty, I command you to come down stairs, and conduct yourself with propriety: — and I *will* be obeyed."

"I will attend you to-day, mother; but I *sha'n't* to-morrow morning. Pray, do not be so cruel as to require me." And Mysie wept afresh and bitterly.

Mrs. Mark Luke was provoked beyond measure; but she was pierced to the heart also. Cruelty! — to be compelled to witness her married in the Ambassador's chapel, dressed in white silk, Brussels lace, and chaplets of orange-flowers; — to a man, too, of the *status* — that was become a favourite word — of Colonel Rigby Blake! Her own doubts and fears momentarily gave way to indignation at the perverseness of her daughter, for whose sake half the perilous adventure was made — so at least she chose to believe.

It is one of the pithy sayings of Miss Luke's native land, that "One man may lead a horse to the water, but ten will not make him drink." Poor Mysie got into the carriage in waiting, at the word of command, and was paraded through the Garden of Plants, suspended from the one arm of the gallant colonel, while her mother leaned, in bride-fashion, upon the other; but nothing could overcome Mysie's sullenness — as the mother wished to consider the deep grief and shame of the child-woman—nor animate her to the semblance of cheerfulness. Colonel Rigby Blake, though complexionally what is denominated a fine, hearty, good-humoured, off-hand fellow, became almost angry with the perverse damsel; while Mrs. Luke felt more distress than she chose to discover; again faltered in her purpose of wedlock, and almost wished that there was still room for graceful retreat even from the Ambassador's chapel.

Lady Di Corscaden, and the French gentleman who attended her ladyship, made nearly the whole expense of the conversation and gaiety. Colonel Rigby was already a well-known, probably the word is, a notorious, character among the Irish and English at Paris. His fame had preceded him; and the circumstances in which he appeared — a notorious fortune-hunter, upon the eve of realizing his projects, and running down his quarry, after a hunt of nearly twenty years, through all the covers of county-balls, races, and watering-places — drew attention and remark to the group. There were several English parties in the gardens, who stared and used their eye-glasses, as they passed, in a style which rather disconcerted Mrs. Luke, accustomed as she was become to the public gaze, and completely overwhelmed her daughter. Which of the two was the most shocked to understand, by the passing whispers, that the *younger lady* was generally mistaken for the bride, it is not easy to say; but the blunder seemed to afford more amusement to the gay Irishman, seven years her junior, than the real lady of his love altogether relished.

Once mistaken for her husband's mother-in-law, the error might be repeated; and she turned to her daughter, grown tall, and suddenly, as it seemed, womanly in her figure and demeanour — at least on this morning, when her calm and determined, and rather comely Caledonian countenance, reflected a burden of grave thought seemingly incompatible with her green years. The state of Miss Luke's feelings had communicated a degree of reserve and stateliness to her demeanour, which added an inch to her stature, and two or three years to her age. Mother and daughter — so fashion had ruled — were dressed exactly alike; but the youthful and more flexible figure of Mysie, though naturally of substantial mould, had taken more of the peculiar *tournure* of France, that envy and aim of all female Europe, than her zealous mother had been able to attain.

On this important day of parade, the desire of displaying extreme elegance and a youthful air had converted the ambitious widow into that most ridiculous of all overdressed oddities — a Brummagem Frenchwoman, an absurd counterfeit, to be detected all over the world with half an eye. Her elaborate toilet had probably drawn an increased measure of

public attention to Mrs. Mark Luke and her party; and the ever-laughing—when she was not crying—Lady Di, protested they would be *mobbed*, and begged the Colonel to walk his ladies in quicker time.

From the midst of a mixed group of students, French, American, and English, who seemed to have been just dismissed from a lecture, two individuals broke hastily away, and directly confronted our promenaders. One was a slim, elegant youth, whose dress and complexion bespoke him a Briton, and the other—but he shall speak for himself:—

"It's no possible, Mr. James, that painted Delilah can be the widow of your auld maister, and my leal friend, Mark Luke;" and Bailie Pirgivie, this *aside* delivered, peered curiously under the demi-veil of the Scoto-Frenchwoman, the elder lady; while the eyes of Miss Luke were riveted upon the youth,—and her face kindled and glowed with the full consciousness of the delightful recognition of her countryman and early companion.

The Colonel felt the sudden nervous tremour communicated to his fair charge by the apparition of the strangers, even before Mysie had drawn her arm from his, and plunged her united hands into those of Bailie Pirgivie, exclaiming, at the same time, "Mamma, don't *you* know James Wilson? I am sure it is he."

"Sure and certain," cried the astonished Bailie, while the young man paid his respects, and with a very good grace, to Mrs. Luke—"Sure and certain it is James; but can it be Mysie Luke I am looking at?" And the worthy man shook hands with his fair ward over and over again, blessing himself in wonder at the change which had come over her in the four years between twelve and sixteen, and at the obvious improvement which had been effected in her appearance, even in France. Here was the miracle, the mystery, to Mr. Pirgivie. At a second glance there was, to be sure, something outlandish about her air and step, and the cut of her bonnet; but, as she clung to his arm in a transport of joy, voice, and manner, and look, were all as kindly, if not as *couthie*, as Mr. Bob's honest and warm Scottish heart could desire; and then the twinkling and almost roguish smile of his dear old friend Mark was visible through all, and completely overpowered him.

"France has not altogether changed *you*, Mysie," he said, with some slight tremour of voice and moisture of the eyes; "ye are still my ain Mysie Luke, my auld friend's dear and only child."

"Still your wee '*four-neuked* Mysie,'" cried the momentarily happy girl, in merry recollection of the Bailie's former description of her roll-about childish proportions; and she glanced towards James Wilson, not without some consciousness of not having degenerated in personal advantages since they last met, far as she fell short of him.

"Ye are a tighter, more strapping lass than I e'er thought to see ye.—But I'm come to take ye home, Miss Luke. Ye are become a serious charge to Mr. Ewins and me. Such is our determination, and I trust ye will not object."

"It is the happiest news I have heard for many a day," cried the girl, with vivacity; and she looked from her mother to her old friend James Wilson, who was still answering the incoherent, rapid questions of the agitated bride, to whom the Bailie now advanced, and made his reverence.

"*Serviteur*, ma-dame!" and he flourished his hat, and scraped in the manner which had so often in former years provoked the wrath of Mrs. Luke.

"For Heaven's sake, who is this original?" cried the ever-laughing Lady Di Corscaden, who had now joined the group: "some of your Scottish cousins—is it, my dear Mrs. Luke? Do, pray, introduce me." The Bailie eyed the elegant suitor for the honour of his acquaintance with a kind of comical apprehension, as if he feared her dangerous, but disdained the unmanliness of flight before the fair face of a lady.

"We stop the path," cried Mysie, walking him smartly off, to the infinite relief of her mother; while Lady Di again exclaimed, "Who is—pray, who is that extraordinary personage—so like one's notion of a character walked out of Galt's books? I do dote upon originals—you *must* make us acquainted—perhaps he would join our dinner-party at Tortoni's. I am sure he would heighten its *gout*. Perhaps he comes for to-morrow's ceremony?"

"Exactly one of Galt's vulgar, *outré* characters," returned Mrs. Luke, flurried, and altogether much alarmed at the proposal made by a lady who valued her own amusement before all the proprieties and decorums in the world, and who for the feelings of others entertained no more consideration than became her privileged birth and high-toned manners.

"I know *you* detest vulgarity," rejoined

Lady Di; "but *we* enjoy it of all things—or a spice of it, now and then:—and Galt ——"

"Don't name him, Lady Di. I assure you his broad vulgarity and caricature is abominated in Scotland, in anything approaching good society."

"*Chaque un a son gout*, my dear ma'am," said Lady Di, shrugging her shoulders; "there is a certain Girzy Hipple that almost killed me with laughing, and whom Byron absolutely adored."

"Byron! Lord Byron!" cried the amazed Mrs. Luke. It was altogether beyond her comprehension that Mrs. Walkinshaw, that vulgarest of all vulgar characters, should be relished by Lord Byron.

"Had you ever the felicity of meeting the original, my dear Mrs. Luke? I should have gone a thousand miles to see her."

Mrs. Luke was fairly posed whether to plead guilty to the ignorance, or to deny the vulgar contamination. Her answer was equivocal:—"I have seen abundant oddities and vulgar people in Scotland;—in manners you are aware, Lady Di, our home-bred people are terribly behind."

"O dear! and so they are; but I have a fancy for vulgarians—now, I know *you* can't abide them—so much for difference of taste. —You remember Goldsmith's showman, Rigby?" The Colonel was startled from a long fit of rumination, a most unusual observance of taciturnity.

"No, 'pon honour, I don't, Lady Di—just at this moment, at any rate."

"A most unwonted and supererogatory degree of candour in an Irishman, who knows every thing, and at all times. But what has come over you?—Goldsmith's showman, you remember, detested every thing *low*, and never allowed his bear to dance to any but the genteelest of tunes, as '*Water parted*,' or the '*Minuet in Ariadne*.'"

Mrs. Luke, feeling the palpable insult, could not even attempt to join in the loud laugh which the Colonel forced up.

"I declare I am glad to see you can still laugh," continued the lively, impertinent, and privileged woman of fashion—"I fancied this new Scottish cousin had been of the line of Banquo, from his ghastly influence upon the spirits of both of you—on such a day!"

"No cousin of mine, Lady Di," returned Mrs. Luke, with a swelling heart, and gulping down her chagrin. "That person is one of my daughter's guardians; and, I presume, has business which may have brought him to Paris at this particular time—perhaps with me," she faltered forth, glad, in this incidental manner, to announce to the gentleman the catastrophe she dreaded.

"To conduct Miss Luke home, I think he said?"

"That he shan't. We won't part with our daughter—shall we, ma'am?" inquired the Colonel. "Surely, if ever the mother's care be needful to a pretty girl, it is at Miss Luke's age."

"Especially one with a fortune," added Lady Di, smiling, and with malicious emphasis. Mrs. Luke made no reply. If truth must be owned, she wished herself a thousand miles off, and Lady Di double the distance. Another English party came forward; and she made a little movement of surprise, and as if to greet an old friend. The gentleman, advancing between two young ladies, abruptly drew them on, while one of them was heard to protest, "The lady was so very like, and yet so very unlike their old neighbour, Mrs. Luke!" "You must be mistaken, Isabella, or else your old neighbour, if a respectable Scotswoman, has fallen among thieves." The speaker might or might not have been overheard by Mrs. Luke's companions; but it suited no one to notice him. Lady Di had probably heard nothing; for not even aristocratic nerves, and powers of face that had been acquired in the college of the Maids of Honour, could have remained in tranquil survey of the group, which she halted to examine at her leisure. "You seem to know these young people, Mrs. Luke?"

"They are the two elder daughters, and, I believe, the eldest son of the Hawgreen family—old neighbours of mine in Scotland."

"And they have forgotten you:—of the class of old gentry I should presume?"

"It is a very old family."

"I should have known it. There is, indeed, no mistaking persons of a certain grade, whatever their country; though but gentry, and *Scottish* gentry too. There is a difference now; don't you think so, Rigby? Ha! they are turning; you must challenge them, and introduce us. I do long to see one real Scots *gentlewoman* in the course of my life. I have known many *gentlemen* of your nation, in the army and otherwise. Scottish and Irish ladies of rank live so much among *us* now, in England, that the dear delightful oddities of my girlhood are no longer to be met with any where."

Beyond a painful and confused perception that something insolent was said, and some-

thing awful impending, poor Mrs. Luke retained no consciousness; yet, as the Hawgreen party again advanced, she met them with a vacant simper and an attempt at recognition; and, while the ladies hastily turned away their heads, was dead *cut* by the gentleman, who drew them quickly on.

"Your Scottish friends don't seem to know you, ma'am," said the Lady Di, in a tone which gave tenfold insolence to her words.

Female blood and bile could endure no longer; and had Mrs. Mark Luke, for her rashness, been condemned, for ever afterwards, to no better society than that of decent tradesmen's wives, she could not have restrained the impulse of indignation which restored her to self-possession, and prompted the retort:—

"No wonder, madam, considering the society in which I am found."

The still brilliant eyes of the Lady Diana shot a momentary glance upon the grocer's rich widow, in which were blended the fires of the noble house from which she was sprung, and the ancient one with which she *had been* allied. A cutting, an annihilating reply was at the tip of her tongue—retort, which must for ever have struck dumb and down the audacious widow of the tradesman—the paltry *Scottish* tradesman—a *London* trader could have outweighed his wealth ten times told;—but pride restrained her; and the same haughty feeling which makes the hero spare the ignoble foe unworthy of his sword, led her to turn away, and say, with calm imperiousness, to her husband's former adjutant, "Find the carriage for me, Rigby." She walked forward.

The unfortunate Colonel had never been in such a dilemma in his whole life. Half-a-dozen affairs of honour, originating at mess, or in billiard rooms, were nothing to this *rumpus* between his patroness, Lady Di, and his "dear Mrs. Luke," within twenty hours of becoming his dearer Mrs. Blake. His perplexity was heightened by shrewdly guessing at, but not knowing the exact tenor of the mission of the Glasgow magistrate. There was danger of losing both ladies, in the attempt to secure one; and it was become a question whether the old friend or the new mistress was best worth securing; yet he attempted a compromise.

"The carriage?—to be sure, Lady Di. It is waiting without there to take us all, a merry friendly party, to Tortoni's."

"I don't go to Tortoni's," cried Lady Di, resentfully.

"I must return home directly," rejoined Mrs. Luke, poutingly.

"Devil a one of ye!" cried the gallant Colonel, with happy audacity, seizing an arm of each lady, and holding them fast. "Am I to be chated of my last hours of freedom? I'll make ye kiss and be friends, ladies. Sure, when there is the common enemy a-head, friends should stick together." This expostulation and exhortation was not without effect. "There is that little fat Scottish fellow waiting us, with Miss Luke and the young lad, as if he had something to say. Let me see you shake hands, ladies, and put you into the carriage, and leave me to deal with him, my dear Mrs. Luke."

Mrs. Luke was really unable to answer. The Colonel joined their hands across his own person, in forced alliance; and Lady Di, forgetting her recent feelings, burst into one of her fits of un-lady-like laughter, exclaiming, "O Gemini, Rigby!—and will you have to fight for it?—to challenge yonder redoubtable short Scottish gentleman?"

Mrs. Luke grasped the arm of the brave Colonel, and became pale.

"Do not be uneasy, my dear ma'am," said the forgiving Lady Di. "Rigby has had fifty such affairs on hand in his time, and got safe through them."

"For any sake, Colonel Blake—for *my* sake!" exclaimed Mrs. Mark Luke.

"For your sake, jewel?" interrupted the Colonel, gallantly raising her hand to his lips; "any thing for your sake, my angel."

"Now, that is what I call barefaced enough," said Bailie Pirgivie, who had taken his station, with Mysie, waiting the exit of Mrs. Luke from the gardens. Poor Mysie bent her reddening face. Daughters are seldom delighted with their mothers' conquests.

"*Pardonnez*, ma—dame," continued the Bailie, addressing Mrs. Luke. "I am sorry to interrupt good fellowship; but it is needful we should have two minutes of a private crack, and that as soon, too, as convenient. As for my ward here, I am resolved not to part with her on such short notice."

"I hope mamma will allow me, at least, to go home with Mr. Pirgivie," said Miss Luke. "He has come far to see us—from kindness to us."

"I have, I am sorry, a very particular engagement this afternoon," faltered Mrs. Luke.

"And another, still more particular, tomorrow morning," added Lady Di, smiling meaningly.

"Engagement here, engagement there, ma—dame, I have two private words to say to you; and the sooner said, let me warn ye, it may be the better for ye."

Mysie and James Wilson appeared ready to sink into the ground. Mrs. Luke became of all hues, and looked deprecatingly to the sturdy magistrate, in whose hands her fate seemed to rest for the present; while her soldier-lover, as in duty bound, swelled and stormed.

"Zounds, sir, do you mean to affront this lady?—a lady under *my* protection? Make way there. Miss Luke, my dear, attend your mother." And the passive bride was dragged forward, while her daughter steadily kept her ground.

"Affront her, sir? No, I mean no affront, and no wrong to her or hers; and I wish every man could say as much for himself," said the Bailie, sturdily, to the champion of the fair.

"It is all a mistake—my dear Colonel—for Heaven's sake!" cried the agitated bride, now standing still.

"Her dear Colonel!—humph—ay, ay, I see it is all ower true we heard, Mr. James; but ye shall not quit my wing, Mysie dear; And I tell you what, mem, marry when ye like and whom ye like——"

"Oh, for any sake!" cried Mysie in an agony, pressing his arm, while James Wilson placed his hand over the wide *outspoken* mouth of the Bailie.

"Weel, weel, my dear, I'll reserve what I have to say to Mrs. Luke for a quieter moment. That, I grant, may be as discreet."

"If you have got any thing to say to this lady, sir, the footing upon which I have the honour to stand with her entitles me to mention, that it may as well be said to me—to me, Colonel Rigby Blake."

"I am not just so clear o' that, Cornel, since that's your title: what if ye should may be no' like just that weel to hear what I had to say? The thing is just possible, ye'll allow."

"If the presence of these ladies were not your protection, I should call you roundly to account, sir, for this insolence."

The Colonel was fumbling about his waistcoat pocket, apparently for his card.

"O Lady Di, will you permit this? will you not interfere?" implored Mrs. Luke.

"Points of honour are delicate points, ma'am," returned the mischief-loving lady; "yet a fracas at this crisis—a duel between a cousin and a bridegroom—does look ugly."

"Gi'e yourself no manner o' trouble, mem," said the Bailie, drily, to the lady of quality. "The brave Cornel will wait lang for an antagonist, before he get me to the field."

"What, sir! not give a gentleman the satisfaction of a gentleman when he demands it?"

"Satisfaction of a gentleman, quo' she? Satisfaction of a guse! A bonny-like satisfaction!"

"Why, sir, you would be *cut*—posted for a coward."

"And what the worse would I be of that?" said the Bailie, laughing disdainfully. "Posted for a coward, indeed! because I have the sense and courage to refuse making a fool o' myself, and fleeing in the face of my Maker's commands."

"A coward does not risk his own life by plunging into the Clyde to save the life of a child," said James Wilson, who, with a natural youthful feeling, rebutted for his associate the term so unendurable to the ears of men and boys, and who opportunely remembered this trait in the history of the Bailie.

"Once when my mother was a girl, Mr. Pirgivie saved her in the Duke of Hamilton's Park from a mad bull, or one of the wild white cattle," said Mysie, who had often heard this tale of Bailie Pirgivie's gallantry and prowess, in the days of other years.

"And I would save her from worse mischief now, if she would but let me," said the Bailie, turning with some re-kindling of old regard to his former friend, as Mysie's anecdote recalled their earlier days.

"If I thought, sir, that this innuendo, sir, was levelled at me," thundered the Colonel.

"Ay, weel, and what would ye do, an' if it were?" retorted the imperturbable Scot.—"Say it *were you*, for connexion's sake—and what then?"

Colonel Rigby Blake had rarely been more at fault in his life. He was rescued by the presence of mind of Lady Di, who vowed, while she laughed immoderately, that, if another word on this absurd affair passed, she would summon the police, and recommend both belligerents to its attention. Neither of them wished to carry matters to this extreme point, and the gentlemen exchanged cards, though certainly with no hostile intention on the part of the Bailie. His object was merely to facilitate an amicable conference. They then separated several ways, each triumphantly marching his lady off the field.

"You are willing to leave me, then, Robina?" said her mother, looking back,

strong emotion working in her face, her usual courage quite quelled—"me, your mother?"

"No, no, mamma—no, no, indeed! I will not leave you,"—and the girl rushed, weeping, into her mother's arms.

"Here is quite a scene, I declare," cried Lady Di. "Won't you, Mr. Pirdidie, go with us, like a good, obliging gentleman, to Tortoni's—and, since you won't fight him, eat, drink, or talk it out with my friend, Colonel Blake, like a good-humoured, sensible man, as I am sure you are."

This was taking the Bailie in the right key; and, although he had some doubts about that "sharp-eyed madam" who made so free with a strange man almost at first sight, and hesitated, as he sharply and curiously eyed her, Mysie's whispered entreaty, "Oh, do not let us leave mamma!" turned the scale; and, with some appearance of better understanding, the gentlemen, so strangely thrown together, growlingly agreed to dine in company with the ladies, and see *Life* in Paris, instead of facing Death in the Wood of Boulogne.

CHAPTER IV.

WE left our party *making way* from the *Jardin des Plantes* to Tortoni's, in two or three cabriolets and a *citadine*. The human contents of these vehicles, Lady Di, as peacemaker-general, had coupled together as best suited her own caprice, amusement, and convenience. Her arrangements had probably met with the secret approbation of at least one pair. Miss Luke did, indeed, hesitate for one second, and look to her mother for sanction, in scampering off with her old playmate, James Wilson, now a tall young man; but the encouraging smirk and wink of her guardian, Bailie Pirgivie, led her, in the next, gracefully to submit to the fate Lady Di had good-naturedly assigned her.

It cannot have escaped the recollection of the "courteous reader," that this party consisted of Mrs. Mark Luke, bride-elect; Colonel Rigby Blake, bridegroom ditto; Lady Diana Corscaden, relict of that Sir Dermot Corscaden, whose territorial titles once tripped so glibly over the tongue of Mrs. Luke; the great Western heiress, Miss Mysie Luke; her guardian, the Glasgow Magistrate; Mr. James Wilson, student of medicine; and a few stray French walking gentlemen, in nominal attendance upon Lady Di, but devoted to all the ladies present, and also very civil to the Scottish strangers. In respect for the King's Peace, the humorous mortification of her particular friend, Colonel Rigby, and her own amusement, Lady Di had secured Mrs. Luke, Bob Pirgivie, and the best vehicle, to her own share.

"How delightful such fortuitous meetings of old friends!" exclaimed her ladyship, settling herself much at large between the bride and the Glasgow ex-Magistrate, and occupying the full space in the crowded vehicle, to which she might be entitled from her rank, though much less would have sufficed for her personal accommodation. "I am certain, sir, that you have come to Paris, after all, on purpose to give our friend, Mrs. Luke, away, to-morrow morning." This was said in an affected whisper.

"*Fling* her away, ye mean, madam," replied the Bailie with much vivacity. "But, no—on my word, I still think mair o' her—whatever she may do o' hersel'. O Bawby, woman!"—but here the honest man, recollecting how vulgar and out of order he was, continued his adjurations in rather purer English, while, with more earnestness than good-breeding, he leant past the intervening lady, with a look and voice so deprecating and regretful, and a little pathetic shake of the head, which, taken altogether, found a way to the agitated heart of our heroine. At that moment, she would willingly have given half her dower, and all her bridal laces, and orange-flowers, and hopes from the Ambassador's chapel, to be once again safe in Ayrshire, and in the modest privacy of her proper home. High as her spirit was, she was unable, at the moment, to resent this public remonstrance or lecture from her old friend. The whole morning had been to her a series of mortifications and provoking accidents. The distress and shame of her woman-grown daughter; her own quick and very painful feeling of the loud, obstreperous, indelicate laugh with which *her* bridegroom had greeted the public mistake of her daughter for *his* bride; the reproachful, and yet pitying looks and tones of one of her truest and oldest friends, *vulgar* and *under-bred* as he unhappily was; the heartless *persiflage* of her noble and high-bred patroness, Lady Di,—were, taken together, overwhelming enough, without the inexplicable and insulting conduct of the "Hawgreen family." *Cut* by them so openly, even in her super-refined and sublimated state; graced by fashionable society, and accomplished by travel; the mother, too, of a considerable heiress; and here in Paris

in a condition to repay the former condescending kindnesses of those provincial gentry, by the patronage and countenance which Mrs. Colonel Rigby Blake had now the power of extending to the former acquaintances of Mrs. Mark Luke;—this, though her mind was filled with many doubts, sorrows, and perplexities, was perhaps the subject that pressed the heaviest upon her thoughts. Then, there was not merely the caprices and aristocratic hauteur with which Lady Di was seized by fits and starts, but her actual insolent contempt to be endured, as on this morning:—And all for what? Reason, making its calm authoritative voice heard in this pause of mortified self-love, prompted such answers to this interrogatory as made the lady turn her eyes from time to time for an instant upon her old friend—the living representative of so many recollections, that, in spite of her, could not be indifferent to her heart; of a mode of living which, though much less *distinguished*, (even now she confessed that,) was probably as happy—certainly more safe.

Those disturbed wandering looks could not be misconstrued. Yet the worthy Bailie was doubtful, as he listened in distraction to the voluble chat of Lady Di, whether he read them aright. Squeezed up into a corner of the carriage, her *demi-veil* gathered in thick folds over her care-worn, if well-rouged face, it was but too evident that Mrs. Luke was unhappy, and the Bailie ventured at last to assign her distracted and anxious glances to the true motive—the desire of extricating herself from her dangerous and ridiculous position, if she possessed sufficient magnanimity and candour to own a folly, and the moral courage requisite to burst from her thraldom. To gain, by any means, a little longer time, appeared the first thing needful; and, as Mrs. Luke had taken no share in the general conversation, he threw out a hint, in talking aside with her companion—"If the gallant Colonel would defer his happiness, were it but for a day, to allow a body time to get a decent *shoot*," (suit,) said the Bailie, "one might attend him."

"So you are thinking of going out, after all!" cried the lady, between surprise and amusement—"like Blake himself—as ready for war as for love. But are you not a faithless man, to harbour such sanguinary designs, after I had bound you over?"

Comprehending the mistake, at which poor Mrs. Luke forced a ghastly grin, the Bailie laughed heartily, crying, "Faithful as steel, my leddy; but I must have my *shoot* first, for all that."

"A shot at Rigby before attending his *bride* to the altar!" Mrs. Luke writhed. "In a *wild* Irishman one might understand this; but in you, sir, a staid, sensible native of a staid, sensible nation!—Have you learned any thing to the disparagement of Blake?—What say you to this freak, Mrs. Luke?—We cannot permit it; it would be the talk of all Paris."

"I have nothing to say to it," returned Mrs. Luke, with peevish impatience; "I have no taste at any time for jokes, and must beg to be driven home—the heat of this day has given me a torturing headache."

"The heat, and perhaps the *dust* of the day," said her ladyship, emphatically; "but I never yet saw a *bride* without a threatening, at least, of headache—'tis better than qualms and heartache." Her ladyship deluged the temples of her suffering friend with *Eau de Cologne*. "You remember our sporting engagement of this morning?—Tortoni's is still four good hours off."

"Sporting engagement!" muttered the rude Glasgow man.

"Pray don't apply that name, *bride*, to me again, Lady Diana," said Mrs. Luke, rallying; "I detest a word so unsuitable to my age—so discordant with all my present feelings." Lady Di stared; Bailie Pirgivie chuckled, and took a triumphant pinch of rappee

"Our friend is a little nervous to-day," said Lady Di. "I see how it is—but we must support her spirits."

"It must be a dowie bridal that does not find spirits to support itself, my lady; though I can well understand that a woman come to the years of discretion, upon the eve of, to her, so awful a change, may wish to commune with her ain heart, and consult her pillow in her secret chamber, instead of gallanting about:—so, I think we would show real friendship by leaving Mrs. Luke to herself this afternoon;" and he turned to that lady, whispering, "Better rue *sit* as rue flit, Ma—dame; Marry in haste, and repent at leisure; Tie you nae knot wi' the tongue ye canna loose wi' the teeth;" all of which warnings fell like so much of the Esquimaux or Mohawk language upon the ear of Lady Diana. "But I'm sworn no to *quat* your leddyship, however," continued he briskly; "as ye bound me, ye are obligated to loose me—go we to Mounsheer Tortoni's, or wherever else." This was said with Bob Pirgivie's most gallant air.

"*Quat* me! you most droll, diverting person; pray, what does quat mean? My dear Mrs. Luke, will you interpret?"

"Nothing — really nothing," cried the distracted bride-elect, more and more overpowered by the exigencies of her condition, and now haunted by the idea that the Hawgreens had learned something very bad — something, indeed, like the shapings of her own indistinct fears — about her future husband, or her own conduct; and, in a sort of desperation, she cried out — "At what a snail's pace that fellow drives! What on earth, Mr. Pirgivie, has brought such *quiet* people as the Hawgreens to Paris, at this time?"

"Cannot be just precese, ma—dame; perhaps to look for husbands to the young leddies, as that appears a plentier commodity in Paris than Scotland — that is, taking *quantity* for *quality*."

Mrs. Luke reddened through her rouge. "That was the Indian brother, the officer brother, we saw with them — was it not? I was sure he was English, Lady Di, when we saw him last night in the Square."

"He is a rather distinguished looking person," said Lady Di, languidly.

"Ye were quite correct," put in the Bailie; "though I thought *he* must have been mistaken when he told us—that's James Wilson and myself, who breakfasted with the Hawgreen ladies this morning — that he had seen Mrs. Mark Luke in such a place."

Breakfasted with the Hawgreens! A *vulgar* third-rate manufacturer, and a poor student, admitted to the intimate, the social family-meal — and, by those who *cut* her! — her!

"Where did the gentleman imagine he saw me? for I had not the honour of being personally acquainted with him, while on a footing of very friendly intimacy with his family."

This remark was, no doubt, partly levelled at Lady Di. It is not in one day that the demon of ambitious vanity is to be exorcised from woman's bosom. This spirit is of the kind which goeth not forth save by repeated and bitter mortifications.

"Ay, but he has seen you, though — and to good advantage — for it was at our last Largs Regatta, that took place before the death of poor Mark, he said ye were the handsomest woman — that's of your years — present on that day, gentle or simple, from the three counties, forby Argyle."

Mrs. Luke drew up, and blushed with gratified feeling. "Of her years" — that, to be sure, was an awkward expression, and, therefore, more like to be the Bailie's own conscientious qualifier, than the phrase of a gallant soldier. Her feelings took a new, though very natural direction. She would, at the moment, have gladly foregone all her personal expectations, to have seen herself the mother-in-law of young Hawgreen!

"The young gentleman has a very polite memory," she said, with affected humility, "at so long a distance of time."

"I denied altogether its being you, ma—dame, who was seen at untimeous hours with, as he alleged, that runagate scamp, Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, and some other notorious card-player or dicer; and —— but we'll say no more about it. It must have been all mistake; though, it seems, about that Pawlace-Royal ye may see leddies no just meikle better than they should be, along with others who may have, perhaps, more character left than sense to guide it, a' helter-skelter through-other; good, bad, and indifferent." Mrs. Luke looked abashed, and, indeed, extremely uneasy; while Lady Di, from threatening anger, passed at once to scoffing mirth.

"I should have imagined a young man of this gentleman's appearance not so perfectly infantine!" she cried. "Does he imagine that women of reputation in this gay city, are to shut themselves out from public amusements, because persons of equivocal character may share in them? Are there to be no more cakes and ices in the Square of the Palais-Royal, because the Scots and English are such *moral* nations, forsooth?"

"Ye may say that, ma—dame," returned the complaisant Bailie; "I, for my ain share, am for letting every land keep its ain lauch; but young Hawgreen, having a charge of young leddies, like Mrs. Luke here, may be a wee nicer."

"Mercy upon me!" exclaimed Mrs. Luke, somewhat vulgarly, and very truly distressed; "they cannot — they dare not imagine that, though improper female persons may mingle with us in the public amusements, they are permitted to join our private society!"

"Why, ma—dame, as to what constitutes female association, and yet keeps free of female society, I leave sic kittle points to the professors; but, if what Hawgreen said of the fashions here be all true, such would be thought but queer doings in Glasgow." Mrs. Luke again writhed. That ancient world was something to her still—something to her moral feelings.

"I am glad to see, from your recovered spirits, that your headache is better," said Lady Di, wishing to change the subject. "We will be long behind our party; and I fear it was very giddy of me to trust Miss Luke to the care of so young a gentleman, though a countryman—and very *un-French*."

Mrs. Luke did not appear at all uneasy at this indecorum.

"Mysie is in very safe hands," returned the Bailie. "It's another of your droll French fashions, for the auld dames and the married women to keep flisking about themselves, while they half lock up the bits o' young lassies, puir things. It's real cunnin' o' the auld limmers. If I were a *demoiselle*, now, I would rebel against that; it's against the order of natur—a perfect mawtronly tyranny and conspiracy."

Both ladies smiled. They were now at the hotel, in which both had apartments. "Thank Heaven, we are at *home!*" cried the relieved bride; and Lady Di, exhorting her to change her dress as quickly as possible, ran in to arrange her own, leaving the old West-country friends together in embarrassed silence.

"Hech! but it does sound strange to me, to hear you, whom I've seen in so many *comfortable* homes, call this house by the dear name of *hame*, Mrs. Luke," sighed Bob Pirgivie. "The French houses, even the best o' them, for a' their gilding and bits of looking-glass, have a cauldrife, hungry, thread-bare look, somehow. But, to come to more serious matters, ma—dame:—As ye are so very near changing your name and condition, and as the interests of my ward, Miss Luke, and the wishes of my excellent fellow-executor, the Rev. John Ewins, regarding her settlement, (in all of which I heartily concur,) make it necessary for me to take the freedom to inquire if this is to be still your *hame;* for, in that case, and, indeed, in any case——"

"I cannot tell where my future home is to be!" interrupted Mrs. Luke, in a tone of vehement grief, and covering her face with her hand.

"Then, let me tell ye!" cried the Bailie, springing alertly from the blue silk and gilt chair, which had creaked under his sixteen stone *tron:* and, seating himself close by the side of the lady, and seizing her unoccupied hand, he proceeded:—"Let me tell ye!—me! your auldest, and, though I say it, one of your surest freends—your own freend, and your faither's freend. Oh, mind that word, Bawby!—'Thine own friend, and thy father's, forsake not.' And where should your *hame* be? Your comfortable, respectable, weel-plenished, mensefu', couthie hame, but in the house with which your affectionate husband dowered ye?—where, but with your own child—a joy and a pride to you, as you to her—blooming like a rose under your ain ee, till, in Providence's good time, ye bestowed her in as kind and safe keeping?—where, but in your ain land, and among your ain kith and kin, and auld freends—a blessing and a praise to rich and poor, and to a' connected with you?—O, Mrs. Mark Luke! take a fool's advice for aince. What support, after a', is there to be found at the pinch, in empty pride and vain-glory? What, against bitter, gnawing repentance, and a sair heart? Gi'e yourself but time to reflect. I'm by a dozen years your senior, and should have a rough notion of mankind; and, since the death of Mark Luke, I have fancied myself as if in the place o' a brother to ye, and a father to his bairn; and, to see ye now hurrying down the *broad* road this gait, I could a'maist rather—a hem!"

The prudent, if warm-hearted Bailie caught himself just in the nick of time. He had never been so nearly committed in the whole cautious course of his bachelor flirtations. He certainly had no idea that Mrs. Luke would catch at his offer. Still, it was *safer*, and more according to rule, to be on his guard.

A stranger might have been amused with the sudden contrast between his late burst of eloquence, and his habitual wariness and temporary embarrassment. Fortunately for the Bailie, poor Mrs. Luke was too much pre-occupied to perceive the scrape into which his gallantry and sensibility had hurried him; or—though without any idea of taking advantage of his precipitance—she might have felt something of every woman's enjoyment in seeing a shy trout bite. Her sole thought was the possibility of still receding—gracefully if possible—but drawing back at all events. Affection for her betrothed presented no obstacle whatever; for, to do her justice, habit made her regard Bob Pirgivie himself with rather more cordiality, and her knowledge of his principles and understanding, with far more reliance and confidence than she could, even at the last hour, entertain for her gallant bridegroom. But what would the world say? What was to be done with the orange-flowers and the Brussels lace-veil? The very wedding-cake had come home before her; and now stood in the saloon,

enshrined under a huge glass, with all its garnishings of rosy sugar-cupids, cooing turtles, frisking lambs, and French mottoes, all about *l'amour*. As she glanced malignantly upon it, she wished the kennel would swallow up its ten golden Napoleons' worth of solid substance and sentimental shadow. Fortunately, most people are married but once in their lives. It is no everyday luxury to die or be married in civilized society.

As she furtively threw her shawl over the plateau on which this auspicious symbol was raised, Bob Pirgivie had the delicacy to blink the sight, and bite in the joke which danced on the very tip of his Scottish tongue. This apparition fairly shrouded, Mrs. Luke sunk into a fit of musing, from which she recovered to say, "I hope *my* Robina may see the Hawgreen girls, now that she—always so great a favourite with them—is old enough to appreciate their many amiable qualities. I confess I do think Isabella Hawgreen the very model for a young lady, had she just that indescribable something of the *manière*, the *tournure*, which foreign education and travel alone can give."

"Humph!" ejaculated the Bailie. "Such as Leddy Di, for example. She *is* a bonnydie, as the children say at home."

"Not exactly that lady. Indeed, I fear, my dear Bailie—*entre nous*—that my unthinking simplicity and goodness of heart have once more made me their dupe."

"Her simplicity, quotha!"—thought the Bailie, hitching on his chair—"her senseless ambition and restless vanity! 'Od, I wish I could but let her feel her ain weight i' the 'fashionable world,' weighed wanting Mark Luke's siller i' the scale;" but this he prudently gulped, and said aloud—"But not, ma—dame, with a woman of your high spirit, beyond retrieval, surely?"

"If it were indeed still possible to retreat, gracefully."

"Gracefully! and is not all that a weel-bred leddy does graceful? *Possible* is it!—ay, and probable and certain. What has blenched ye? Where's the spirit I have so often admired at, which made a certain leddy, langsyne, carry whatever point she set her heart upon, right ower the hard head of a worthy friend that's gone."

Mrs. Luke smiled unaffectedly at this opportune recollection of former contests and victories, and observed, in a low determined voice—"If it be, as I have heard whispered, that the real *status* of the—the gentleman, is none other than that of captain in the Galway militia—the Galway militia, sir—and that the *soi-disant* title of colonel is only held from the Hungarian service, or that of the King of Sardinia, I should imagine that so palpable a deception justified every extremity."

"Certainly, ma—dame," replied the Bailie, laughing in his sleeve at this turn of affairs, and at the geographical or political coupling of Hungary and Sardinia; "and were he a cornel of the Pope, or the Grand Turk himself, even that tells for but little in our hamely, far-awa country, in point of rank; and I'll no promise the pay is great things either, ma—dame." This last was added in an under-voice, and with a very significant nod.

"I certainly never had any intention of settling abroad *finally*," continued Mrs. Mark Luke, insensibly, however, relapsing into her grand manner. "There is a certain duty, Mr. Pirgivie, which every one owes to one's native country. If an eligible investment in land could be obtained for my daughter's fortune, I should conceive it a duty, an absolute duty, Bailie Pirgivie, for us to reside, for at least a part of every year, on her own estate."

"Investment by marriage or purchase, ma—dame?"

"That as might be," replied the mother of the heiress, with dignity. "I must also frankly own that I see much to disapprove of in foreign manners—female manners in particular: not *manière*, you will please to observe; that is all proper: and Robina is still such a mere child—"

"Seventeen come September—not just such a child—and as tall as her mamma," put in the Bailie.

——"Such a child, sir; and has been kept so close at her studies, that, hitherto, these matters were of less consequence: but, now that her manners and religious sentiments, as an Englishwoman, are to be formed, and her *intellect* developed, I believe London or Bath would be the most advantageous locality for us for a few years. I am led to understand that the society there is every thing that can be wished for—all right in the *morale*; you comprehend me? and, in refinement and propriety of manners, quite unexceptionable."

"What the deevil is she after now?" grumbled the Bailie in his throat, as he vehemently tweedled his thumbs, and fixed his intelligent and searching gray eyes upon the speaker; "no fairly out o' the frying-pan, than she maun plunge i' the fire;

naething less than a veesible judgment will drive the mischief out of that woman's natur; it were as good a deed as drink to let her marry that rip of an Irishman, and I warrant me he baste her bones. I'll no say either, but, countrywoman as she is mine, he'd get the warst bargain. If it werena for the sake of Mysie, young Jamie Wilson, who deserves better than a *fule* for a mother-in-law, and the memory o' Mark Luke, she should, I trow, take her swing for me. But I must keep down my corruption, and gi'e her rope the day; and, whether it shall prove her tether-safe, or her hanging-tow, I wash my hands o' her."

Acting in the spirit of this manly and considerate resolution, the Bailie said aloud, "I heartily approve, ma—dame, of your leaving France to-morrow, by the scriech o' dawn, if ye like; or if ye could pass the barriers the night yet, a' that the better; and I'm your man for passports and portmanties. There is young James Wilson, who came to this town to finish his medical studies, and young Hawgreen, and indeed every countryman ye have, will stand by you, if ye stand by yourself, and help you out at this pinch. But only gi'e your consent, and leave to us the ways and means. Faith, I wouldna care to run awa wi' ye mysel' frae that confounded Irish chap! How they do put their glamour ower the women folk!"

At this critical stage of the conversation, Lady Di re-entered, gaily equipped for the "sporting engagement;" and Mrs. Luke could only reply by a significant, and what the Bailie rejoiced to believe, a gladly consenting look.

"I declare this too fascinating Bailie Pirdidie has made you forget your engagement with Colonel Rigby, and Miss Luke, and every body," said the lady, gaily: "what can you have been laying your heads together about?"

"Talking of life and manners, madam," replied Mrs. Luke, in her grand style.

"Dear! that must have been *so* good!" cried Lady Di, faintly giggling. "*Life and manners*, discussed in Paris by my friend Mrs. Mark Luke and Bailie Pirdidie of Glasgow:—will you be so very good as enlighten poor me on those topics?"

"I was talking with my daughter's guardian, Lady Di, of my present idea of finishing her education"—in England, she would have added. But the Bailie, who by no means approved of the "sharp-eyed madam," as he called the relict of Sir Dermot Corscaden, of Castle Corscaden, barony of Tirrykeeranvey, &c. &c. being let into their scheme, abruptly broke in.

"How much more *finishing* do ye think Mysie needs? I have seen as trig and winsome a lass finished ——"

"*Trig* and *winsome!*" interrupted Lady Di; "I do dote on that dear Doric. Do you know, I once perpetrated a Scottish ballad?"

——"As trig and winsome a lass as ever stood in Miss Luke's slippers," continued the Bailie, nodding familiarly to the woman of quality—"ay, though they be of silks and satins—finished handsomely off, heel and toe, and high dances, by one winter session at auld Mr. Macskipsey's school. But ye'll no guess who that might be, ma—dame?"—And honest Bob—determined, for one eventful day, to go all fair lengths in flattering and wheedling, that might advance his main object—now glanced, smirking blandly, and nodded knowingly to the other lady.

"How can I tell? How am I to spell your *hums* and *ha's*, Bailie Pirgivie?" returned Mrs. Luke, smiling. "Many very genteel young women were placed under the finishing care of that *artiste;* who had, in his time, seen the original Vestris—*the* Vestris—*Le Dieu de la Danse*, Lady Di."

The Bailie forgave even this highly embellished portrait of the poor little *grand* Mr. Macskipsey—who still, in his merry moods, haunted his fancy, attended by many ludicrous images of the shabby genteel; and he went on, peering funnily into the lady's face, —"Ye'll have no remembrance, I dare say, of a certain Miss Barbara Peaston, a standing toast at every curling-club dinner, masonlodge meeting, and wherever good fellows congregated, for ten miles round Paisley? Na, na, ye'll have nae mind o' her, I'se warrant me."

There was a time when Mrs. Mark Luke would have been overpowered and disgusted by this style of compliment. Now, smiling, she demurely answered, "Such nonsense, Bailie!" And the few words were said with that original little air of Westland, or more properly, womanly and natural coquetry, which, having once sat with an engaging rustic grace upon the youthful Miss Barbara Peaston, did not yet wholly mis-beseem the comely Mrs. Mark Luke, in her tenth lustre.

The very adoption of the homely yet imposing title of *Bailie*, instead of the formal *Sir*, or the cold *Mister*, augured favourably. Lady Di congratulated her friend upon the improvement of her spirits, and urged her to

be expeditious. "All the English in Paris," she said, "are by this time assembled in the *Champs Elysées*, on the tiptoe of expectation. Though the *millionaires* and our friend Mrs. Luke can afford to throw away their money, poor I must look well after my dear fifteen Louis."

This was all mystery to the Scottish magistrate, who requested explanation. "Our bets, sir," said the Lady Di; "your countryman, Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, runs his bay mare, *Cuttie Sark*, against some famous brute belonging to Mr. Phipps Mason. Mrs. Luke has fifty Louis, and I my poor dear fifteen, depending; so, you perceive, we must be off to see fair play."

"Fifty Louis upon *Cuttie Sark!* — Mark Luke's widow!" vociferated the Bailie, throwing up his hands in utter consternation and horror, and rolling his eyes round upon the guilty lady.

Lady Di, screaming with laughter, seemed about to fall into fits; while Mrs. Luke looked as if desirous that she could sink, and for ever disappear through the well-waxed boards.

"This dings a'! this dings a'!" continued the Bailie. "What is this world to come to? What *has it* come to?" He strode about the apartment.

"My good sir, now that I am able to speak," said Lady Di, pulling his sleeve, and trying to keep grave — "you certainly could not seriously imagine I meant to say that *Cuttie Sark*, Sir Ogilvy Fletcher's famous mare, was Mr. Mark Luke's ———"

"This is enough, madam—too, *too* much!" broke in Mrs. Mark Luke — her eyes sparkling and her brow glowing with the passion which seemed to distend her figure, as she came forward, shivering with anger. "But I have courted such insult, meanly courted it, and well deserve to bear this and worse indignity: and for this one—this *last* day—it shall be borne!"

"I do not pretend to understand these humours, madam," said the Lady Di, with constrained calmness, and dropping her eyes disdainfully. "For my own part, I should hold it beneath me to address any thing to the most inferior person in the world, that I should not think fit to say to Mrs. Colonel Rigby Blake — ay, even in presence of her lord. But I cannot spare another minute,"—and she looked at her watch. "I am, indeed, no adept in vulgar altercation, and have no taste for it." She proceeded hastily to the door.

"Bear with me for this one—this last day," cried our heroine, now seizing the locked hands of the disconcerted Bailie—"my oldest, my truest, my almost sole friend; and let me still, for this *one* day, have my way—my *revenge;* I have had my bitter, bitter punishment already."

"Lady Di" was announced by an English footman as in the carriage, and impatient; and Mrs. Luke took the arm of the Bailie, and descended; and offering as many apologies to her *friend* for detaining her, as if no *fracas* had happened, took her place by that lady's side.

"We must give the lady her own way of it," observed the Bailie, endeavouring to recover himself. "Honour the bride on her bridal day! is a saying of our country." Lady Di bowed graciously, and forced a smile; he began a course of moral rumination, while the ladies chatted together.

"Which of these women now," thought Bob, "is the most *twa-faced?*—I'll no swear but that *Bawby* beats the *real* lady; though *policy*, and a ready knack at dissimulation, is the accomplishment the most cultivated among her kind, it's alleged. It's not so much, after a', the rank and station that makes double-dealers and dissemblers, as the mean necessities, real and imaginary, belonging to them. There is myself, now, an *independent* man, in humble rank, with nothing to seek, and nothing to be ashamed of—who carena a fig for stars and garters: I would be worse than a fool to be *twa-faced*, like a needy courtier, or a creeping, ambitious politician;—and there is Mrs. Luke —" but his musings were interrupted.

To beguile the time, and look like the time, Mrs. Luke inquired after some of her old friends and neighbours in Scotland. She had casually heard that "her favourite," Miss Maria Smythe — poor thing! — was married to a Doctor Somebody, and settled in Bath: an excellent match, she understood, and she was so glad! "Now, sir," continued Mrs. Luke, "how much of this is true?"

"All that, and more," replied the Bailie, with meaning looks. "The Smythes, *your freends*, had aye a genius for grandeur, and a vocation that way. Mrs. Dr. Somebody—for neither do I, though it is often enough in the papers, remember her new name—drove into Glasgow in her coach and four, the other week, with outriders!"

Mrs. Mark Luke looked astonished — and not so "very glad" either, as might have been expected, at the worldly prosperity of

"her favourite." What a wizard was that Rochefoucault!

"Is the gentleman an *estated* man?" she inquired; "or is it a *commercial* fortune?"

"Nothing but the turf aboon her head will cure the affectation of that woman—bray a fule in a mortar," thought the Bailie; but he replied, with a touch of humour—"*Vested interest*, ma—dame—held by right of his Majesty's patent: an estate, which, though moveable, will endure as long as ignorance and credulity on one side, and impudence and humbug on the other, shall last among the *upper* and the *lower* ranks. The gentleman is what long ago used to be called a German, or *quack* Doctor; but the age has advanced since then, and what was an ambulatory village stage has grown into palaces and mansions—so thriving an art is *medical* humbug:—and the *spiritual* has its uses too. *Intellectual* education has gone clean out of fashion among us in the West, since your time; and Mrs. Smythe, and her eldest daughter, Miss Smythe—who was 'renewed,' and it was about time—removed their *establishment* from the *Belle Retiro*, to somewhere near London. It is a 'decidedly pious' seminary, now; most eligible for all such *select* young ladies, whose fathers can afford £300 a-year for their education. There are two carriages, a visiting chaplain, and two *serious* footmen attached: so they tell me at least."

"How very intelligent!—with a vein for satire too," whispered Lady Di, in a voice meant to be heard.

"Poor Maria Smythe! poor thing! so to throw herself away upon a quack! My excellent friend, Mrs. Smythe, must have been so shocked!—so *immoral*, too!" cried the incorrigible Mrs. Luke.

"Oh, faith, for that of it, if the pills are harmless pills, and only sold to rich fools, I hold *quacking* in medicine to be one of the most innocent branches of the general art of humbug: but, of course, the *spiritual* part of the concern must, in the meantime, disown Maria, and her coach, and her pill-box palace; until she and her husband are rich enough to repent, and retire to live a new life upon the gathered fruits of the old one."

The Bailie was launching out into a sober right-earnest discourse upon self-delusion, imposture, hypocrisy, and vanity, when his vein was checked by perceiving Colonel Rigby Blake, still at some distance, but galloping up to the open *hired* vehicle—alas, it was only *hired!* Lady Di had got hardened to such trials; but Mrs. Luke felt them still. She was apprehensive, too, that Lady Di might be displeased at being attended in public by "a *figure*," and whispered an apology.

Her ladyship, who, when nothing crossed her humour, was far from being ill-natured, made quite light of this awful dispensation:—"Don't mention it—I rejoice in him—I shall make my own of him. Luckily his full black-brownish suit favours my project. I'll swear he is a Scottish *savan*—Leslie, or Dugald Stewart. I have seen many English philosophers odder-looking fish. I shall not despair of making him a member of the Institute."

It was now about three hours past noon, on a day of broad, brilliant, sunniness; and how gay the scene that met the *undazzled* eyes of the Glasgow ex-magistrate upon the Boulevard, which the party entered! Numerous groups of the fashionable English residents, dressed exactly as if the *Champs Elysées* had been "the Park," were intermingled with Frenchmen and ladies, airily attired in rich, gay, parti-coloured costumes. Germans, Americans, and Russians—natives, indeed, of every civilized country—might be seen here, and to the best advantage. The fine horses and dogs, and handsome equipages of the English, and the pretty young English and French girls, in charge of the lovely children running about, or grouped beneath the trees, all helped to enrich the living picture.

"As fine as Glasgow Green, Bailie?" whispered Mrs. Luke, while her restless, and now practised eye, ran over and threaded the gay crowd, in search of fashionable *friends* and acquaintances.

"I'll no just say, ma—dame," returned the patriotic Scot. "It's no a' gowd that glitters."

Mrs. Luke had already, in one group, traced her daughter and Mr. James Wilson, with "the Hawgreen family." The sight was more than gratifying to her vanity: it was soothing to her maternal feelings; fortifying to the secret purpose she revolved. She determined not to press her own society upon them at such a time, and attended as she was; for the gallant bridegroom was already in waiting. After honouring the Bailie, seated very much at his ease between the ladies, with an involuntary scrutinizing glance, the Colonel paid his tender obeisances where they were principally due. "Sir

Ogilvy was despairing of you, ladies," he said.

"And Colonel Rigby Blake
Sighing his soul towards the *Grecian* camp,"
said Lady Di, bending towards him confidentially. "I assure you, you will need to look about you, though, Blake;" and she lowered her voice to an earnest whisper, as Mrs. Luke (her ears in her neck) affected to point out some one in the crowd to Mr. Pirgivie. "It was with some difficulty I was able to break off an animated—and, I suspect—business *tête-à-tête* between the lady and her sagacious countryman, and persuade her to keep her engagement. Take care she don't——" and a significant gesture told the rest.

"Don't what, ma'am?"

"Why, what your horse seems thinking about—shy—back—bolt——"

"Poh!" ejaculated the gentleman, patting the neck, and dexterously yet gently reining in his restive steed.

"Well, with such a master of the *manège*, and of the military seat, too, there is little room for apprehension;" and the lady continued aloud, as if playfully giving orders to the rider—"Steady there—light hand—mind your balance—play light! I see I have not quite forgot the slang of the riding-school. Your tit, though not quite thoroughbred, nor longer a filly, has high spirit, I find, and a delicate mouth—impatient of a rough curb—must be managed——." These equivoques had the usual fortune of being perfectly well understood by the person intended to be kept in the dark. Mrs. Luke, however, looking all unconsciousness, inquired if the Colonel had seen her daughter, probably for the pleasure of having the young lady's companions pointed out. "There was Miss Luke, not twenty yards off! and with the English party we saw in the Garden of Plants this morning."

"So I declare," said Mrs. Luke, raising her eye-glass; "how stupid! not to know my own child, and so many old friends!—I don't wish to waste time on recognitions here, though, with so much business before us. Let us move forward, pray, and pass them;" and, waving her hand to the promenaders, the carriage swept past at the nod of the attendant horseman; while the Bailie, smiling graciously to the group, shouted "All's right! we'll meet ye, belyve, young folks! Haud ye merry!"

"Well, the Hawgreen girls are *distingué*, even here," cried the now delighted widow—"and such an assemblage of fashionable English! You are in high luck to-day, Mr. Pirgivie."

"Ay, and of Scots and Irish, I dare say; but our poor nations go for nothing, Colonel. John Bull, when he goes a-travelling, quite over-tops Paddy and Sawney. But can you tell me who is that chap, dressed like a mountebank, in tartans, plaided and plumed, and coming this way, strutting, with a well-dressed mob at his heels?"

"Oh, next to the full-tatooed New Zealander, our greatest lion," cried Lady Di; "*L'Ecossois, L'Ecossois, Le brave Ecossois!*—a Mr. Macrusgal, or something like that—a Highland gentleman, known to grouse-shooters as Glencladdach."

"Whom you must know very well, Bailie," rejoined Mrs. Luke.

"And for little gude—for little gude," sputtered the Bailie. "Here is a muster o' the representatives of the Scots Estates in the capital of France!—Chiefs, Lairds, and Commons—pack o' ne'er-do-weels! West Country Exclusives!"

"Hush! hush, my dear sir!" cried Mrs. Luke, laying her hand upon the sleeve of the angry speaker. "Desire the man to draw up, Colonel—Sir Ogilvy Fletcher is riding this way; and the CHIEF coming towards us too." Our heroine was in greater *flustration* than became her now thorough breeding.

"Baith cleared out! baith dished!" muttered the Bailie, in angry soliloquy; "and young Shanklie, the Writer to the Signet, auld Shanklie's son, at their tail;—och, och, och, I can understand it a' now: a something to be negotiated—some trifle mair o' Mark Luke's hainings, obteened upon the ower-burdened acres; ay, ay—ye may be prepared, ma—dame, for I'll ensure you o' a hat the day from Sir Ogilvy."

"A *hat!*" cried Lady Di, laughing; "of all things, a hat! Now, were he the chaplain that took to-morrow's office——"

"A *bow* he means," whispered the agitated Mrs. Luke, as the gentlemen surrounded the carriage on her side.

"Shocking bad *hat!*" whispered Colonel Rigby, as Mr. Shanklie made his reverences. "Pray, who is that person?"

"Shanklie, an Edinbro' W.S., my lady," said the restless Bailie; "a chap that holds the pair o' them, Celt and Saxon, Lowland baronet and Highland chieftain, in ae leash—and that made out o' lang slips o' mouldy parchment. Oh, the degenerate mongrels! That Sir Ogilvy has, I declare, lost both

flesh and favour, and the look o' the born gentleman, which once sat on him weel; — broken down into half jockey and half blackleg — his very cleidin' looks scourie and threadbare, for a' its pretence. It's both a pleasure to witness his punishment, and a pain to think on his folly. Infatuate beast! There's what comes of an ancient baronet of three clear thousand a-year, coping and vieing with a neighbour Earl of fifteen: and but a puir Earl, they say, for a'. Weel, weel, let them take their ain way o't; but, as for Mysie Luke or her tocher —— hem."

"You seem disturbed, sir," said Lady Di, as her companion, Mrs. Luke, continued engaged in animated talk with the gentlemen.

"Disturbed, ma'am! If ye but kenned the history o' that pair o' youths! As for young Glencladdach there,— to be sure he was long a minor, had a fool for a mother, and was bred at an English school; and wha, among the wealthy Saxon *churls*, was to presume to eclipse one of the *Clanna Gael*, forsooth! ancient as the hills, the waters, and the woods? Weel do I ken the natur o' the vain beasts! Wha was to ding the chief, either on the turf or in the clubs and the hells? And there they are; gentle beggars here, should be lords at hame; cap-in-hand for a well-interested loan o' a pickle o' Mark Luke the grocer's siller — wha, to be sure, had sense enough to buy and sell them baith in a market."

Lady Diana Corscaden, relict of Sir Dermot Corscaden, of Castle Corscaden, &c. &c. &c. now stared even more broadly at the eloquent Scot than that gentleman had at first sight done at herself. What strange talk! — could it be meant *at her!* There was little time for reflection. Sir Ogilvy accosted her; while Mr. Shanklie, W.S., economically including his client and Mr. Pirgivie in one short *conversation*, or 6s. 8d. worth, exclaimed — "The very man we were looking for."

"Ha! Bailie Pirgivie! By all that's honest, but your father's son is welcome to Paris!" And the young Chief — for he was not yet twenty-five — covered the affectation of this accost by a vehement shaking of hands. "I say, Lady Di, we shall have him introduced to Charles Dix."

"Yes, as an Edinburgh Professor, who, in Holyrood, bowed to fallen royalty, long, long before you were born."

"No, no — as a non-juring Scotch bishop — next, in the good love of his Majesty, to a true Jesuit. Well do I remember you, sir, coming to Glencladdach, when I was a little boy, to buy my father's kelp. Why don't you give us such prime prices, you Glasgow men, for our kelp now?"

"Ay, five pound, or less, in place of fifteen or twenty, makes a difference on the rent-roll at the year's end — as Mr. Shanklie there, who is a braw accountant, will ken; but the sheep, the woo', and the big farms will make up for it." The chieftain felt this observation so unpleasant that he heard it not.

As Mr. Pirgivie afterwards remarked, Glencladdach could still boast all the state and trappings of the feudal chief, save the *following* — save the *leal* vassals, the affectionate kinsmen, the devoted fosterers, for countless generations — knit to their head, the representative of their blood and name, by ties which nothing could have dissevered but the Chief's resolute determination "of doing what he would with his own." It was with strong contempt that our shrewd commercial man saw the chieftain strutting here, plaided and plumed; a painted pageant, from which heart and soul had departed; "a Chief of the Black-faced and the Cheviots," as the Bailie jeeringly called him; neither a plain, sensible, intelligent, modern improver of his property, nor yet a generous feudal superior of the olden time; vain and extravagant, and thence needy—his very profusion stimulating his rapacity, and Mr. Shanklie still ministering to all his follies and ruinous projects, as obsequiously as he had done to the general *clearing* of the estates.

While that heartless process was going forward, the young Chief and his mother had remained in England. The poor clansmen were all gone beyond the western seas — wailing, as they went, that *Ranz des Vaches* of the Highland mountains,

Farewell — farewell — farewell!
We return no more for ever!

But their clan head could still, at a distance, play the part of a Chief. The plume, the dirk, the piper, the clan-tartan, and the clan-ensign, were better understood and more prized than ever. The gathering cry was still *Clach an Claddach!* and prettily would the young ladies in London and Paris drawing-rooms startle and scream when Mr. Macrusgal raised it; but, in Glencladdach itself—Glencladdach, desolate!—"the daughter of the voice in the hollow rock" alone repeated that slogan.

"That young man is quite a passion in Paris at present," said Lady Di, "with his

figure, and his piper, and, above all, his sword exercise."

"The lad has done greater feats than any ye have heard of yet," said the Bailie, whose gorge rose at the swelling, thriftless squanderer. "In one morning, that young chap, in Highland phrase, 'put out fifty smokes' —smothered the warm ashes on fifty hearths, coeval with his fathers'—in his glen, and by the side of his ancestral stream and loch. Heartless puppet! And he'll strut there in his tartan array!—the puller down of roof-trees—the extinguisher of household smokes! But he reeks and fumes bravely himsel'; and indeed, it's the natur o' them. Weel, vengeance is swift."

The party were now awaiting the arrival of the celebrated *Cuttie Sark*, on whom, this day, so many hopes and fears hung, and of her no less illustrious rival, ***Dandizette Secunda***. Both fair ones were now seen slowly approaching, still in their *body-clothes*, and led by smart English grooms. A crowd of gentlemen, and amateurs of the Turf of all ranks, were gathered about the horses, and accompanying the procession. Sir Ogilvy, impatient of the slowness of the approach, rode off to meet them; and the party in the carriage were left with the Chief and Shanklie, who now, with the piper, was his sole *tail*.

"I understand you have been round the coast and among the Isles lately, in the steamers," said the Chief, addressing Mr. Pirgivie. "I hope you did not forget Glencladdach—did you mark how my timber thrives?"

"I'll no soon forget Glencladdach—either as I saw it first or last—and I saw it first lang before the days of steamers. It was then a very region of beauty and peace. And now—but I maun own ye manage every thing weel, Mr. Shanklie:—there's a rich English rector has the shooting and the castle; an English company the bark and the thinnings of the woods; and another the sawmont fishing. The very nut-braes, hanging ower the loch, and the bits o' juniper bushes are rented, they say; so that a callant or a lassie durstna take a pouch-fu'. Conscience! ye maun be as rich as Jews, you Chiefs! Ye maun be coining money for the laird, Mr. Shanklie:—a' thing turned to account yonder. You landed folks, Mr. Macrusgal, are fairly beating us bits o' spinning-jenny bodies about Glasgow in *economics*. When they began at the Mains to sell Sir Ogilvy Fletcher's skim-milk and orra cabbage-stocks, it was a speech to the country this new-fashioned thrift. 'He'll surely make a fortune now,' was every auld wife's word:—but, in *economy*, the Highland Chiefs beat the Lowland Lairds yet—when they draw rent for the very *nuts*. But I'm a great admirer o' thrift mysel'."

Mrs. Mark Luke was upon thorns at this ill-bred side-talk, and the young Chief not altogether at his ease; but nothing daunted the "austere composure" of Mr. Shanklie.

"You hear, Shanklie, what the Bailie says of the income you are realizing from my estates," cried the young Chieftain, covering his wincing with the air of bravado.

"Income!—na, it's no wonder ye *dash*, you Highland Chiefs and Lowland Lairds. Your rent-rolls, what wi' the shooting, and the nuts, and the fishing, must be tripled or quadrupled upon your grandfathers'. To be sure there is a change on the face o' the country. How many able-bodied followers could the Macrusgals muster now, if they a' turned out in Glencladdach?"

There was no reply to this home question.

"Weel, the *men* and the *merks* are not to be both got. Then there was the bits o' scattery *bhalies* and touns, the sma' farms and cot-houses, with the potato-fields, and the kye at e'en, and the blue reeks climbing in the calm gloaming sunset—

Like little wee cluds in the world their lane,

as Jamie Hogg sings. These are all gone, to be sure; and the Highland lasses and the Highland lilts, and a' the happy looks and cheerfu' voices o' yon Westland glen. I'm amaist thinking you Highland Lairds are now constructed upon the new principle of consuming your ain reek yoursels—never a smoke to be seen now for ten and twenty miles around ye;—but ye must be getting monstrous rich, and that's a great consolation."

The young Chief, though half-offended, laughed off the affair, by again calling Mr. Shanklie to listen to this consolation; but that functionary was closely occupied with Mrs. Luke, who was chattering eagerly at hand, and eyeing *Cuttie Sark* pacing gracefully in the distance.

"And rich ye would be, Glencladdach, *mur vhiodh ma na phoit ach Macheoc's n liadh*.* I suppose you have a little Gaelic?"

The young chieftain coloured and laughed—"So you understand Gaelic, too!" he cried.

* Were no one about the kail-pot but Maceoch and the ladle—*i. e.* no foreign drains.

"*Peckan peckan*," returned the Bailie. "A little of 'the wisdom of your ancestors,' as this"—and, looking full at the *Doer*, he emphatically repeated—"'*An lon-dubh, an lon-dubh spògach! thug, mise dha choille-fhasga fheurach; 's thug esan domhsa am monadh dubh fàisaich.*'——Wi' so mony strange tongues, spoken everywhere among ye, I may say my say in Erse, surely."

"Oh, do, do translate, Mr. Macrusgal!" cried Lady Di. "I vow, those are the very gutturals of dear old Blucher!"

"And may," said the young Chief, "be very well translated by the memorable exclamation of that veteran when viewing London from the top of St. Paul's—

What for a plunder!

You are better versed in our clan legends than I had supposed strangers, sir. That is, by tradition at least, the speech made by my ancestor Rusgal to a Scandinavian invader of his insular territory;—other accounts say it was spoken of an encroaching Bishop of Moray, who juggled us out of some of our fairest lands, in name of the Church."

"I understood it was said by your great-grandfather, to his fair-seeming law-agent, after the '45—when, under pretence o' securing his property, deeds were exchanged."

"But, in the name of the King's English, tell us what it means," interrupted Lady Di, with great vivacity.

"'The *ousel*—the cloven-footed ousel—I gave him the sheltered woody pasturage, and he returned me the black, sterile heath:'—a very common bargain now-a-days in the Highlands, my leddy, where the great beast is devouring the little beast, and the least fending as it can. That's anither of your Erse proverbs, I think, Glencladdach."

"You are a very Sancho Panza, Bailie, in Gaelic sayings; but, having got my *dittay*, a little broad salutary Scotch in the ear of Fletcher there, might not be amiss. There he comes!"

Fuming he came!—"Those d——d impudent rascals, the French police, had interfered to prevent the racing match from taking place on the Boulevard!"

Where, then, could it be held? Or, was there still time to fix upon another course? Mrs. Mark Luke thought not—there was just time to dress before Tortoni's hour; and a dinner ordered at sixty livres a-head deserved a dress toilet.

"Sixty livres a-head!" exclaimed Mr. Pirgivie.

"And very moderate, too, sir," said the Chief. "If you have seen the *carte*, you would say so; and the judgment and taste Sir Ogilvy exercised in ordering this—after all—paltry sort of cit dinner. The ladies patronize *Tortoni*, as he is great in *pâtisserie*, and this of to-day is a lady's affair; though, in my humble opinion, the *Café Anglais*, *Lointier's*, or even *Grignon's*, if a man wants to *really* dine, or a stranger to see genuine French cookery, would have been the better choice; but you *may*, after all, see tolerable *patés aux huitres!*"

"I should wish Mr. Pirgivie to partake of one *recherché* dinner in Paris," said Mrs. Mark Luke with emphasis, and better French than usual.

"Can the Ethiopian change his colour?" groaned the Bailie, in secret; but he said aloud, and with the appearance of good-humour—"A sixty livres' worth at one sitting will content me, ma—dame, and astonish the *natives* at home for the rest of my life. Sixty livres' worth shovelled down a man's throat at one sitting!"

His imagined ignorant surprise excited a general smile; and Colonel Rigby Blake rejoined, "Why, sir, I made one, and Sir Ogilvy another, at the time the allies were in Paris, of fifteen gentlemen, who dined at *Very's*, (then a name,) at twelve Napoleons a-head; but then the Chambertin was superb."

"Pitiful doings those, too," said Sir Ogilvy. "London, after all, for a dinner—or, at least, for a bill: Glencladdach and self once partook of the works of Francatelli, when he first came over, ordered by Sir George ——, and to the tune of twenty-five guineas a-man."

"Faith, it would take to sell the skim-milk at the Mains for a while, and rent out the nut-braes, to stand thae doings," said Bob Pirgivie:—"that is, and leave ony thing in the sporran after clearin' the lawin'."

"Abominable extravagance!" said the young Chief, half affecting repentance; "and not, after all, to be compared to a dinner of the venison of *my* own hills, the grouse of *my* own moors, and the fish of *my* own lochs." The young man did now look as if, between vanity and grief, he felt, and deeply.

"Which yon fat English rector is feasting upon; while you brave lairds are a' running off to France, or——"

"No more of it, my dear sir," whispered Mrs. Luke.——"As Robina, which is quite natural at her age, cannot endure formal dinners, I shall send *her* home to dine, at any rate."

"And, as James Wilson can't afford them, suppose he keep her company, and give her Glasgow news?" said the Bailie.

"With all my heart!" and as if to receive her orders, the young pair came hastily up, —Miss Luke, all in a glow, exclaiming,—"Mamma, we have been looking for *you* everywhere. The Hawgreen ladies and Mr. James had so much to tell me about poor Halcyon Bank: — The lauristinus hedge we planted long ago has flourished so; and the arbutuses are quite lovely: — how I long to see them!" This important intelligence was very well received; and the earnest whispers of her mother, at which Mysie smiled and coloured, sent off the young lady hastily with her companion, in spite of the remonstrances of Colonel Blake, who loudly insisted upon Miss Luke being included in the dinner-party, long after she had tripped out of hearing.

"Allow me, Colonel, to have my own way with my daughter to-day: — to-morrow she may be under a different commander," said Mrs. Luke, with dignity; and the Bailie looked all admiration, or "fidging-fain."

"Whose study will be the sweet creature's happiness every hour of my life," said the Colonel, bowing; "I'll be hanged as high as Haman, if I know, Lady Di, which of them two ladies I love best."

"*Fi donc!* to doubt that *to-day!*"

Mrs. Luke now expressed her anxious desire that the running-match should be instantly decided one way or other. The wishes of a bride were gallantly declared *imperative;* and, indeed, all the gentlemen owned that this disappointment would greatly abstract from the pleasure of their last dinner with Rigby, the *non-Benedict*. Though the match had been prohibited upon the spot, by the impertinent interference of the police, there were other places not far off; and it might, with clever jockeyship, be all over before a second mandate could be issued. Besides, the English were wilful as the *diable*, and would have their way. Happily, *Cuttie Sark* and her beautiful chestnut rival were still at hand, with their liveried attendants, and the different betters and amateur jockeys. Lady Di had already booked in Bob Pirgivie to hedge her small bet to the extent of five Louis — farther he would not move; though, on this day, he had resolved to stick at nothing in the accomplishment of one object. As he truly alleged that he had little skill of racers, he proposed to go with young Hawgreen, to deliver letters to some of his Excellency's household, from Mr. Ewins, but engaged to join the party, with his companion, at Tortoni's. His low, earnest, hurried whispers with Mrs. Luke at parting, were satisfactorily explained by the note-case conveyed to her, with the emphatically pronounced words, "Remember your paction!" and, as the sinews of action, whether in love, war, or the turf, were thus left, he was seen to climb a passing empty cabriolet, without much regret by the sporting party. Sir Ogilvy, indeed, greeted his departure with a volley of curses, concluding with "Old miserly hunks! let him go, and be d——d— would not sport a piece upon my mare for the honour of Ayrshire! Shanklie sneaking after him, too!—all the better!"

As we feel fully more interest in the mission of Bob Pirgivie, than even in that famous match — though but a little-go — between Mr. Phipps Mason's *Dandizette Secunda*, and Sir Ogilvy Fletcher's celebrated Cuttie Sark, which had once carried the Oaks, and been second for the Derby — of which "famous match," so important to all the *retreaching, refugee*, or *volanting* English in Paris, Galignani was kind enough to acquaint all Europe — we shall take leave to follow the Scottish ex-magistrate to the hotel where the Hawgreen family had their temporary residence.

After explaining at some length, and really with remarkable delicacy, the particulars with which, we hope, the "gentle reader" has done us the honour to get acquainted, and privately soliciting the friendly co-operation of young Hawgreen, the Bailie, in full saloon, continued—"To be sure, it would be far wiser-like they waited a while, and were married in their ain parish, after a contract properly drawn up by her late father's Doer. But, as better mayna be, and to break the fa' o' the mother's pride, I hope Mr. Ewins will have no reflections. We cannot, in this hurry, get a' thing so right and tight, as if we were in Glasgow; but ye'll just, Mr. Shanklie, since the job has fallen to you, draw up twa or three words o' a minute, frae the bits o' heads and jottings I have made here. We'll get James and Mysie to sign it—abundance o' the law does not break the law — and I'll take the responsibility o' a' the rest on my ain head."

Mr. Shanklie expressed his zeal and willingness to officiate.

"I have no doubt o' you making a sicker bargain, as, luckily, the siller is a' on our side; and, as we are no marrying into an *estated*

family, it will be the easier managed. The bairns o' Margery Robina Luke, by this marriage, to get the gear divided among them in equal portions. Primogeniture is for the grandees, and Mrs. Mark Luke has had, I'm thinking, just enough of fashion to last all her days. Failing heirs of this marriage, then the courtesy to James, no forgetting an augmentation of the mother's settlement, should her child go first, and remainder to the Sprots o' Saltcoats:--and, by the by, I forgot to tell her aunty, that Jean has married the skipper of a Liverpool steamer, and ta'en up house in Greenock;--and a capital managing wife she makes!—the Sprots of Saltcoats, and the other nephews and nieces of Mrs. Barbara Peaston and Mark Luke, Esq. of Halcyon Bank—gi'e him a' his titles, I beg of you, for Mark showed pride enough, though no in the wife's line: his was pride of wealth, honest man, in which there is some sense—but hers;—the *Exclusives*—they are born idiots a'thegither!"

After a necessary visit to his temporary banker, Mr. Bob made another to Mrs. Luke's apartments, into which, before him, in spite of the screaming and jabbering of the porteress, Mr. James Wilson had found his way to the young lady. They were discovered by the Bailie at a game of mutual instruction, puzzling over a chess-board, James gravely studying a *fifth* move, under the counsels of Mysie.

"Ay, ay—will ye get through that game before your mother and me come home, my dear?—see to draw it out till then; in the meantime, Mr. James, here's a bit study for you, and you can tell my Mysie a' about it, by word o' mouth, or just ony way ye like." And, giving the young man a note explanatory, and a scroll of the contract aforesaid, the Bailie, with Hawgreen and Shanklie, set off to the far-famed Tortoni's, though with some apprehension on the part of honest Bob.

"I'm no nice o' my gab," said he, after pondering a while; "I carena muckle what I eat; and I wudna like to affront the Frenchman, by scunnerin' at his dainties; but I hope he'll no pushion us wi' puddocks—I couldna stand them."

And the Bailie, who moderately loved comfortable eating, and plain British cookery, made a wry mouth, as if already half-poisoned, while young Hawgreen laughed heartily.

"*Grenouilles frites*—or *en papillote*? I dare say we shall have them dressed both ways," he said; and the Bailie, who saw no point in the joke, gave his head a knowing swag, as if protesting *in limine* against all suspicious French fare.

Enthroned in the place of honour, supported by the Chief and the happy Colonel, Mrs. Mark Luke, splendidly dressed and rerouged, so well sustained her character as a fashionable, that no one would have suspected she had been a considerable loser by the failure of *Cuttie Sark*, and had just paid her losses with the best grace in the world; still less could the bold stroke she meditated be surmised.

The banquet proceeded; young Hawgreen highly diverted with the suspicious looks which Bob Pirgivie, affecting perfect unconcern, cast upon the different delicacies recommended to his attention by Mrs. Luke or Lady Di, and refusing whatever he could not understand. That was, indeed, nearly six dishes out of every seven that appeared. Precedent or example was, in this case, no rule; for he shrewdly suspected that his fashionable friends would swallow any *soss*, as he named the different *entremets* and *entrées*, provided it was in vogue. But Hawgreen was a safer *fugleman* at this table: so he tacitly constituted him his taster, eating freely of whatever that young gentleman first partook.

Indeed, Bob, ever afterwards, eulogized *dinde aux truffes*, and *jambon glacé*, and even made Mrs. Luke write down their proper names in his note-book, beside his observations on Notre Dame, &c. &c. that he also might be able to tell his convivial friends in the West, of his proficiency in a branch of science so zealously cultivated by English travellers. Of the wines, reserving his opinion of their quality, he partook with entire freedom; and the most choice, or at least, the most expensive in Tortoni's cellars, were produced to toast the health of *the bride*. Scots, English, Irish, and French, did equal justice to bumper pledges, drained to her future connubial felicity; and the facetious and jovial Mr. Bob Pirgivie was soon almost as much admired here, and became nearly as much at home as if the French capital had been his own city of Saint Mungo. Both Hawgreen and the Chief knew enough of Scottish social manners to be able to draw him out: and his old songs once again came tingling over the ears of Mrs. Luke, not now *vulgar*, but like the rushing of her native "Cart rinnin' rowin' to the sea." They brought a rush of warm tears to her eyes.

The only drawback upon the pleasure of the evening was Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, who soon became half tipsy, and wholly sullen, and who, ever and anon, sulkily eyed the gay Irish soldier, and muttered that "The rapparee" (who, by the way, had large unhedged bets upon *Dandizette*) "had doctored *Cuttie*, and would jockey his own mother, if there was such an old woman."

The harmonies of Bob Pugivie were never more needed to keep peace than now; and he did not spare them. Lady Di Corscaden did him the honour to *encore* his brilliant

Contented wi' little and canty wi' mair;

which the French gentlemen present declared to be worthy of Beranger.

"Where was ever ony o' your Berangers equal to ROBERT BURNS?" cried the convivial Scot, becoming quite enthusiastic—warming, as it were, in his own fires. "But I'll give you anither, gentlemen—and it's just new aff the irons. It's by a Glasgow man, too—and that is SANDY RODGER; but I must have something by way of a punch ladle in my hand, for I cannot get on without that." Hawgreen handed him a *meerschaum*, which formed, at least, a very good substitute, while he sang—

SANCT MUNGO.

Sanct Mungo was ane famous sanct,
  And a cantie carle was he;
He drank o' the *Molendinar Burne*,
  Quhan better couldna be.
Zit, when he could get stronger cheere,
  He ne'er was water dry,
But drank o' the stream o' the wimplin *worm*
  And let the burne run by.

Even Sir Ogilvy Fletcher hiccuped in chorus to this *chanson à boire*, the first stanza of which brought off the bowl of the pipe, and raised Mrs. Luke to her feet, to go off, only to be gently pulled back to her seat by the encircling arm of the gay bridegroom, while Bob continued to chant—

Sanct Mungo was ane godlie sanct,
  Far-famed for godlie deeds;
And great delight he daily took
  In counting ower his beads.
Zit I, Sanct Mungo's youngest sonne,
  Can count as well as he;
But the beads whilk I like best to count,
  Are the beads o' the barley-bree.

"LET GLASGOW FLOURISH!" shouted the Bailie, rising, and flourishing his substitute for the habitual ladle; "where did ever ony De Beranger make a song like that? But, as the leddies insist on *deoch-an-dhoris*, and as our friend Mrs. Luke has a deal of business before her——"

"'Hath,' like Juliet, 'need of many orisons!'" sighed Lady Diana, looking, with mock meaning, to her *friend*, the *bride*, unable wholly to control the aristocratic superciliousness which so often beset her manners, even in the most delicate circumstances.

Probably Mrs. Luke required this gentle fillip to her resolution. She had been too elevated in her surroundings for the last four hours, or too feebly reminded of her real *status*, as she delighted to call it; and that it was by money, or money's worth, and sufferance alone, that she held even her present brevet rank in the skirmishing corps of the aristocracy. She did not possess any one of those brilliant, or even of those frivolous talents, which, by amusing or throwing reflected lustre over aristocratic circles, make their way for a time. She was neither an eminent singer, nor a skilful musician. She could neither recite nor personate. Her only language was Anglo-Scottish and bad French. She had never written a novel, nor yet a volume of poems; she neither was a distinguished sinner, nor yet a celebrated devotee. She was no dexterous flatterer, though she had often done her best. In the arts of *toadyism*, she was a poor proficient; and her quickness and naturally high spirit made her often restive in the only capacity in which the fashionables could disinterestedly have deigned to use her—namely, as an object of indignity or impertinent ridicule, as a *butt* for the exercise of their small wits. Princes and grandees—the whole higher order of aristocracy in former ages—entertained, for their dignified amusement, dwarfs, monsters, and crack-brained persons. We believe that there are dwarfs and other pitiable abortions of nature to be found in some northern courts still: Dr. Clarke found them in Russia. But their substitutes, in our more refined society, are now *butts* and *oddities*, and, more deservedly, the aspiring "*vulgar*," like our Mrs. Mark Luke. For the *vulgar* rich, neither their money nor servility, and scarce the "extreme obligingness" of "the good sort of creatures," can purchase the immunities of aristocracy. With great difficulty it is that they can even buy themselves up a step; as when the son of a wealthy manufacturer or loan-contractor obtains, by special favour, the third or fourth daughter of a pauper-peer, upon condition of an ample jointure, and as little connexion as possible with his *low* relations. Vigilantly guarded as the frontiers of the great world are, it is scarce possible for an interloper like Mrs. Luke to make way even into the outer

circumvallation. The great Lady Diana Corscaden herself, had partly lost caste, since she had married an Irish baronet, and become a poor widow. Neglected herself, what could she do to give a lift to a friend in the worse circumstances of Mrs. Mark Luke? This was a consideration that had frequently of late forced itself upon the attention of that lady, who began to think seriously that she had been paying too dear for the whistle, if her calculations had not been formed altogether on wrong data: for there was *vulgar* Bob Pirgivie on intimate terms with the Hawgreens; and actually, as they drove home, talking as if the society in which he had spent the afternoon was beneath him! In intelligence, in solid worth, in the good and useful, if not the highest purposes of life, and in rational and steady principles of conduct, feeling his superiority to those exalted personages, Bob had no false shame in avowing it. Perhaps, after all, it was as needy spendthrifts, and thence mean and shuffling, that the independent ex-magistrate, who was just rich and right-thinking enough to fear no man's feud, and value no man's favour, most heartily despised the beggar-pride of the Sir Ogilvy Fletchers and Glencladdachs. Their high-flown notions of their immense personal consequence, and the privileges of their rank, were, unaffectedly, so much mere "leather or prunella" to him, that he could have only a glimmering understanding of them; and though he perfectly comprehended the nature of Mrs. Luke's admiration of those things, it was impossible that either the haughtiness, the really insolent, condescending familiarity, or the more tolerable caprice of those great personages, could have affected him as they did that ambitious, imitative, and sensitive lady.

So quietly and unconsciously did Mr. Bob set himself above all that sort of "fudge," that it seemed as if he could not even perceive the fun of it; or how, like Mrs. Luke's lofty aspirations, it might be converted into the amusement of the middle order—his own respectable and respected order, so long as they choose to respect themselves.

It was in vain that Mrs. Luke vindicated the objects of her admiration, upon the score of what she, with curious felicity, persisted in calling *manière;* though she certainly meant demeanour, or graceful carriage, if not good manners. Their elegance, their polish, their refinement, were such, and so great!

"Weel, weel!" cried the Bailie, with some impatience; "let them keep a' that—the carving on the outside of the cup and platter—and you leddies may take on as reasonable a quantity of it as ye see fit; but let us not put the cart before the horse—not forget the weightier matters of the great law of life—judgment, and justice, and mercy; which are sometimes at a low pass in high places."

This sober, or rather dull conversation, brought them to Mrs. Luke's apartments: it had taken place immediately after they had set down Lady Di at some *soiree*, to which she was engaged, and after she had, with the charm of manner which she could assume at pleasure, taken leave of Mrs. Luke, until they should meet in the Ambassador's Chapel next morning! The adieus of the Colonel, if not quite so graceful, were, of course, more animated. Mrs. Luke preserved her dignity and presence of mind in a way that made Mr. Pirgivie fancy her even too good an actress; but that was all laid aside as she entered the saloon, where the young lovers—for, we suppose, we may now so name them—awaited the arrival of their seniors, probably with no great impatience; but, so soon as the carriage wheels were heard, with some trepidation, visible especially in the maiden.

In all her *lunes*, Mrs. Luke had retained, unimpaired, the warm affections of her sensible child. The preservation of her mother from degradation and misery, was, to the affectionate girl, as true a source of happiness as her own prospects. After a moment of confusion, she first hurried to the table where the chess-board stood, and where she ought to have been found, and next to her mother's arms, with the simple and yet all-comprehensive exclamation of "O mamma!"

The young lady was directed to carry her mother's shawl to her chamber, and that, in a voice so different from the imperious commands of the same morning, that, with the fresh roses of her cheeks glowing through grateful, through rapture-risen tears, Mysie hastened off. Her absence gave the more freedom to the conference which took place. The young man, though he could very truly have declared that he had loved Mysie Luke all his life, and now more than ever, was compelled to avow that she had not been *explicit* with him; that she would not believe her mother and her guardian sanctioned such an *impromptu* marriage; that, in short, he had not been a successful wooer.

"My Robina has conducted herself exactly with the delicacy and propriety of a young lady, upon whose education such pains have

been taken:—referred herself to her mother!" said Mrs. Luke, with matronly dignity, and sailing off. "I must interpret between her delicacy and her feelings; and I flatter myself that, under my influence, they will not be found unfavourable to so valued and so long and well-known a *parti*."

Bob Pirgivie made a face as she left the room, roguishly repeating "*parti*," and then turned to the chess-board.

"Still in the *fifth* move of the game? 'Deed, Mr. James, I fear ye are but a young hand at it; I'm sure I gave you time." The young man, perfectly understanding the double meaning, protested, with spirit, that he had made very good use of his time.

"I wager, now, your main difficulty lay in persuading Mysie that this was not ower good news to be true. I must try my hand with her. We must strike while the iron is hot. The mother wants to make Mysie the scapegoat of her own idiotic matrimonial project; but I am sure that she, no more than myself, would bestow her daughter unsafely or unworthily; and so, young gentleman, you are not to take haste, as to time, for precipitance of judgment. And there's Mr. Ewins has just as deep a veneration for high *connexion* as becomes the humility of a Christian minister! and Mrs. Luke herself is not to be trusted a day without danger of a relapse into gentility;—so the sooner the wedding's ower——"

But, at this stage, Lisette—the nimble and present-everywhere Lisette—won by the good mien of the young Scotsman, threw open the door of the adjoining room of the suite, as if by accident; beyond which, in a farther room, might be seen Mrs. Luke fitting her own intended bridal robes upon her daughter, and turning Mysie round and round admiringly.

Bob Pirgivie, perceiving that his office of pleader was likely to become a sinecure, took the privilege of old friendship to advance briskly into the chamber. Mrs. Mark Luke had been certain that considerable shortening would be required in the robe; and Lisette, that Mademoiselle required every strawbreadth of the length, with, perhaps, a little tightening across the bust, and a lowering of the *corsage;* all of which improvements were accomplished with a dexterity which none but a French waiting-maid can hope to attain in such matters. These hurried alterations were a happy diversion to the feelings of our heroine; and though, in her secret quailing heart, she wished it were to-morrow night, and all well! she actually began to concoct the paragraph of announcement which was to enlighten and astonish the West of Scotland, and hastily to write numerous notes, still to be despatched, late as the night wore. Those that were of invitation were managed by Mr. Bob Pirgivie; but it was Mrs. Luke herself who wrote the dignified epistle, containing in its bulky envelope various I. O. U.'s and receipts, all of which Colonel Rigby Blake found on his dressing-table when he woke about eleven o'clock next morning, and remembered that it was long past his marriage hour!

He dressed in some haste, and inquired if any one had called for him. "No one." No message come to him? None, save that laid on his table. Colonel Rigby Blake, whether of the Sardinian or Hungarian service, as he drew on his boots—a business of some difficulty—danced round the room, and cursed, by his gods! the whole Scottish nation. He was certain that there had been a preconcerted plan among the Scots to intoxicate him; not, after all, that this was a catastrophe so extremely rare, or so difficult to accomplish, as to require the stratagem imputed to Bailie Pirgivie and young Hawgreen. As he reflected farther, he came to the confused recollection of having given a challenge to Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, who had not only imputed foul play to him in the racing-match, but told him Lady Di had once said "he was of the family of those Blakes of Kerry, who are first cousins to Paddy Blake's Echo."

All this night-work now appeared a dream. There was but one thing of which he had a pleasing certainty. He had gained above three hundred Napoleons by the breaking down of *Cuttie Sark*—fifty of them from Mrs. Luke. There lay Mrs. Luke's rejection, to be sure; but in the same envelope was consolation—a discharge in full of all his debts to her—a larger sum than ever Bob Pirgivie could be brought to confess even to Mr. James Wilson, though he had advised the discharge. Things looked brighter. The disappointed bridegroom swallowed a tumbler of soda water, with a corrective admixture of *eau de vie*, and, striding about the room, regarded his own reflected image with returning complacency, till he finally broke out—

"By the La' Harry! but you're a devilish lucky fellow, Dennis Rigby, my boy—there where you stand—to have jilted that cursed old Scots widow!"—and he bowed to his reflected figure in the looking-glass. "The Edinburgh attorney says, the utmost farthing

of her jointure is but £200, and the sly Glasgow fellow will take care no one shall touch a tester belonging to the girl. Health, to you, Dennis, again!" And, as the brave Colonel swallowed the rest of his tumbler, his rather handsome face mantled with the bright flash of the idea which a full mouth would not allow him to express. Out it came—the Irish are the most soliloquizing people on earth:—"By Jove, I'll swear to Lady Di, I got royal last night, on purpose to have a gentlemanly excuse for jilting the owld girl this morning!" Applying to the sugar basin for the means of giving his moustache an additional and fiercer "upward swirl," and once more counting his yesterday's gains, the Colonel sallied forth, and, in ten minutes, set the military Irish and English who frequented his *café* into fits of laughter, with the comical history of his jilting the dashing Glasgow widow.

At the door of the house to which he was going, (the lodgings of Lady Di,) sat that widow in an open travelling carriage, stuffed with trunks and boxes. She was flanked by Bob Pirgivie and young Hawgreen.

"Ah, ma'am, sure now, you were not going to take French leave of your old friends?" And the Colonel spoke so blandly and cheerfully, and looked so perfectly disengaged and happy, that the quailing heart of Mrs. Luke beat more freely. "Rejoiced that I am just in time to wish ye a good journey, and return you my best thanks for many kindnesses—but for that of this morning the most of all." Raising himself up on the step of the carriage, the bold Irishman swayed past the Bailie, and, by way of leave-taking, suddenly saluted our astonished and angry heroine very fairly.

"Weel, sorrow the like o' that saw I ever!" said Mr. Pirgivie, very much relieved, however; though, in the next second, half suspicious of some trick. Mrs. Mark Luke indignantly rubbed her violated lips, and young Hawgreen struggled with choking laughter.

"Carry my blessing to my daughter that should have been," continued Blake. "I would have made her a most loving father."

Our heroine made a desperate rally. "My daughter set off for Scotland, with my son-in-law, from his Excellency's, about two hours ago, and immediately after her marriage.—Drive on."

The gallant Colonel did look a little blank at this intelligence; but it was only for a second.

"Then, ma'am, with your leave, I must send by you my remembrances to the bride." And a second sudden and intrepid salute left poor Mrs. Mark Luke in the condition of "a woman killed with kindness," and bursting with rage. Bob Pirgivie, slily winking, pulled down young Hawgreen, who was about to vindicate the lady's quarrel.

"Poh, ma—dame! why take offence at an old friend's freedom—and at parting, too? Ye mind our famous auld sang,"—and Bob half warbled—

"O Jamie, ye hae monie ta'en,
And I will ne—ver stand for ane——"

Mrs. Luke almost frantically interrupted the stave, which, she doubted not, was very well understood by Lady Di, now bending almost over the carriage from her open window, and retiring anon to give way to her immoderate laughter at Blake's consummate impudence, and the ludicrous distress of our heroine. Meanwhile, the undaunted Irishman had so far gained the good graces of Bailie Pirgivie, that they shook hands heartily—the Bailie going, in the warmth of the moment, the length of saying—"And, if ever ye come to the West-country, I hope ye'll spend an afternoon wi' me: ony body about the Exchange Rooms will be able to tell ye where Bob Pirgivie hings out. 'Od, we'se get Davie Bell, and twa or three other gude chields, and mak' a night o't."

While this was passing, Mrs. Luke so far recovered herself, as once more to kiss her hand, and bend gracefully to her fair friend leaning above.

"*A—dieu*, Lady Di! If you ever visit the West of Scotland, I shall hope for the honour of entertaining you so long as I and my family can make your residence agreeable, at my poor place of Halcyon Bank, near Largs:—we can boast, at least, charming sea-views." Cards of address were once more proffered, in spite of the Bailie's nudging admonitions of the elbow, and conveyed through Colonel Blake.—The postilion yelled—"*Allez donc, coquins*"—the horses neighed, the whip cracked, and the wheels flashed and rattled along, while Mrs. Mark Luke, throwing herself back in the carriage, exclaimed, in a very natural tone—"Thank my stars!"

It was arranged that they were to stop for a day or two at some intermediate stage, that Mrs. Luke might pause from the manifold fatigues of the last trying thirty hours; and then they were to join the young pair at Rouen—which manufacturing city the Bailie wished to visit on matters connected with his business. Beyond the barrier, they lost their

escort, young Hawgreen; the Bailie, after what he had seen, no longer dreading a forcible abduction by the Irishman, whom, when now fairly rid of him, he pronounced—"No a bad sort o' chield, had he been brought up to some decent industrious calling, and no kept swaggerin' and bullyraggin' a' his days in the army, which is certain ruin to a man's principles."

Exactly seven days after this, all the church bells in Glasgow were busily swinging and jowing upon the morning of a *Fast-day*, preliminary to a Sacramental occasion. At all such solemn times, a more than ordinary degree of sanctity screwed up the virgin visages of these well-known spinsters of the Trongate, Miss Penelope Parlane and Miss Betty Bogle. When the attentive grocer (the successor of Mr. Mark Luke) sent the former lady the usual gratis reading of the *Chronicle* upon that morning, just as she was going off to the Ram's-horn Kirk, she marvelled at the audacious profanity of the man.

"But, mem, mem! — there's great news in't," cried the grocer's eager lass.

"News! — and what's worldly news on a morning like this? Go back, my woman, to your master, and tell him from me, that, prent them wha like, I'll read no prents on the Fast-day."

"But, mem! — it's a' about Mrs. Mark Luke's marriage!"

The strongly excited Miss Penny now hesitated for a moment — sat down — undid the strings of her lappet — took the paper in her hand — got out her spectacles.

"That makes a difference — that may be considered in the nature of a private communication — and no what's called public *news*. Ye may leave the room, my woman: — my compliments to your master.— And a *letter* too on a Fast-day morning, and the Paris post-mark!"

"What can have come ower Miss Penny this morning?" thought our other fair friend, Miss Bogle, all through the singing of the first psalm and a good part of the first prayer, as she sklented to the church-door. "I wish she may be in her ordinar' health — sae regular a kirk-keeper, especially on Fast-days." But, before the prayer was finished, the tardy lady slid on tiptoe into the pew; and, at the conclusion of the service, was duly interrogated: —

"I was sure ye were ailing, mem; and a' through the sermon — and a *great* discourse it has been! — ye seemed wanrestfu', and fidgety-like."

"Now, mem — I must confess, mem, I found the Doctor rather driech and dry this morning, mem — but have ye heard the news?" This was whispered, while every fibre of the speaker's spare frame vibrated from intense interest. Yet it pleased Miss Parlane, to tantalize the startled Miss Bogle all along the fine street fronting the Ram's-horn Kirk, and down the Trongate, to the lodging of the latter, where, taking out the sinful Fast-day *Chronicle*, and putting on her spectacles, without one warning word, she read as follows: —

"MARRIAGE IN FASHIONABLE LIFE. — Married, at the Chapel of the British Embassy in Paris, James Wilson, Esq. eldest son of the late Doctor Wilson of Glasgow, F.R.C.P., to the beautiful and accomplished Margery Robina, sole heiress of the late Mark Luke, Esq. of Halcyon Bank, Ayrshire. The ceremony, which was in the Presbyterian form, was performed by the Rev. Doctor Draunt. The fair bride, who has just entered her seventeenth year, was splendidly attired in a robe of beautiful Brussels lace, with a rich white satin under-dress; head-dress, pearls, and wreaths of orange flowers, under a deep bride's veil of exquisite Brussels lace. Robert Pirgivie, Esq. of Glasgow, the guardian of the bride, had the honour to give her away.

"Among the company present, we observed Mrs. Mark Luke, the mother of the bride; Lady Diana Corscaden, relict of Sir Dermot Corscaden, of Castle Corscaden, barony of Tirrykeeranvey, County Donegal; and many of the English fashionables at present in Paris. The lovely daughters of Hawgreen of that Ilk officiated as bride's-maids upon this happy occasion. Immediately after the ceremony, the happy pair set out in a carriage and four, to spend the honeymoon at the seat of the bride's mother in Scotland."—*From Galignani's Messenger.*

"Weel done, Bawby!" exclaimed Miss Bogle; "but it's Bob Pirgivie has saved her, after all; for I had it from a sure hand, that had it from the gardener's daughter at Hawgreen, to whom Miss Isabella's maid wrote hame, that Mrs. Mark Luke was making hersel' the clash of a' France, from her on-goings wi' a tearing Irish sergeant o' dragoons, whom she was on the point o' running off wi', when Bailie Pirgivie arrived, and got

out a *letter-de-catch-her* from the King of France, through the interest of our ain Provost Ewing, who wrote to the French King, by the Bailie, with his own hand."

"Weel, weel, mem," interrupted Miss Penny, tossing her lappets, (a lady who, it may be remembered, had some remote affinity to the ancient landed aristocracy of the West, while Miss Betty was of *thrum* descent,) "no doubt ye'll be best informed; — but Mrs. Mark Luke has done a prudent, wise-like, motherly thing, in bestowing her daughter upon James Wilson, though they might have waited a year or two. I believe the Lukes are now, by this marriage, something sib to mysel' either through the Lockharts, or the Baillies o' the Upper Ward; and here is a letter in Mrs. Luke's own hand, franked by the Ambassador, hoping, for *auld langsyne*, we will — that's you and me, mem — receive the young folks and her at Halcyon Bank on the 23d. Jean Sprot is to put a' in order; and there is some bit suit or two o' Valenciennes lace, wi' the gloves and bride's cake, but they wudna be safe in a letter."

Miss Bogle raised and spread abroad her black silk mittens.

"Mem! mem! the like o' that! But she was aye a by-ordinar' woman for spirit, that Mrs. Mark Luke. Auld Mrs. Luke's gear will surely be divided now: but you'll have to take down the *Apostle spoons*, and the silver *posset pot*, and give up, and surrender, Miss Penny —— Hech! — but this will be news to Glasgow!"

We do give our heroine credit for this last stroke of diplomacy. It was, to be sure, at the end of the day, mortifying enough to close just where she had begun, with Mr. Bob Pirgivie, Miss Betty Bogle, Miss Penny Parlane, and Jean Sprot, at the bridal banquet, — but there was no help for it; and, without propitiating these influential ladies, she never could have fairly recovered from her last stumble, and been enabled to talk to the end of her life, of her "friend" Lady Di Corscaden, lately become the lady of her other old friend, Colonel Rigby Blake, but, by courtesy, retaining her title; nor yet have told a thousand anecdotes of her foreign travels and quality connexions; waxing especially eloquent when neither her daughter, her son-in-law, nor yet Bob Pirgivie, was present to check her vein.

We must not conclude our history without a *moral;* and we shall give one from an old dramatist, that is equally applicable to all our Scottish personages — Sir Ogilvy Fletcher, Macrusgal of Glencladdach, Mrs. Mark Luke, and the Stronas: —

Let all men know,
That tree shall long time keep a steady foot
Whose branches spread no wider than the root.

THE FRESHWATER FISHERMAN.

BY MISS MITFORD.

PART I.

This pretty Berkshire of ours, renowned for its pastoral villages, and its picturesque interchange of common and woodland, and small enclosures divided by deep lanes, to which thick borders of hedgerow timber give a character of deep and forest-like richness, seldom seen in countries of more ambitious pretension;—this beautiful Berkshire is for nothing more distinguished than for the number and variety of its rivers. I do not mean, in this catalogue, to include the large proportion of bright, shallow, trouting streams, for the most part unchristened and unregistered even by a parish historian, or the compiler of a county map, and known only as "the brook" by the very people whose meadows they dance through. To confine myself to rivers of state and name, we have, first of all, the rapid, changeful, beautiful Loddon, a frisky, tricksy water-sprite, much addicted to wandering out of bounds, and as different from the timid, fearful, nymph Lodona, whom Pope, in a metamorphosing strain, was pleased to assign as the source of those clear waters, as any thing well can be. Next we have the Kennet — "the Kennet swift, for silver eels renowned," according to the same author, and which, in our part at least, has, generally speaking, a fine pastoral character, now sweeping along through broad valleys of meadow-land, rich and green, and finely dappled by trees, chiefly oak and elm, in park-like groups; now confined within a narrower channel, and spanned by some lofty bridge as it passes the quiet village or small country-town, enlivening every scene which it approaches by the pleasant flow of its clear

waters, cool and glittering as a moonbeam. Lastly and chiefly, we possess, for the whole length of the county, and for the most part forming its sinuous boundary, the deep majestic Thames, gliding in tranquil grandeur, with a motion so slow, as to be almost imperceptible; reflecting as a mirror, in unbroken shadow, every tree and shrub that fringes its banks, and exhibiting, during all its meanders, a lake-like character of stillness and repose — a silent fulness — a calm and gentle dignity, which is, perhaps, in all things, from the human mind to the mighty river, the surest and highest symbol of power. It is singular, that even the small streamlet near Cirencester, where, under the almost equally celebrated name of Isis, the Thames takes its rise, is distinguished by the same unruffled serenity, (the calmness of the infant Hercules,) for which its subsequent course is so remarkable. And what a course it is! The classic domes of Oxford; the sunny plains of Berkshire; the Buckinghamshire beechwoods; Windsor, with its royal towers; Richmond, and its world of gardens; then London — mighty London; and then the sea—its only rival in riches and in fame. Half the bards of England have sung of their great river; but never, I think, has it been more finely praised than in two sonnets, which I will venture to transcribe from the manuscript which is open before me, though I may not dare to name their author: * a man too eminent in the broad highway of life to care to be seen loitering in the flowery paths of poesy. They have a local propriety, since the writer, of whose birth-place Berkshire may well be proud, passed his early youth in this neighbourhood, and it is in remembrance of those days that they were written.

TO THE THAMES AT WESTMINSTER, IN RECOLLECTION OF THE SAME RIVER BELOW CAVERSHAM.

With no cold admiration do I gaze
Upon thy pomp of waters, matchless stream!
For home-sick fancy kindles with the beam
That on thy lucid bosom coyly plays,
And glides delighted through thy crystal ways,
Till on her eye those wave-fed poplars gleam
Beneath whose shade her first and loveliest maze
She fashioned; where she traced in richest dream
Thy mirror'd course of wood-enshrined repose
Bespread with hordes of spirits fair and bright,
And widening on till at her vision's close
Great London, only then a name of might,
To crown thy full-swoln majesty arose,
A rock-throned city clad in heavenly light.

TO THE SAME RIVER.

I may not emulate their lofty aim
Who, in divine imagination bold,
With mighty hills and streams communion hold
As living friends; and scarce I dare to claim
Acquaintance with thee in thy scenes of fame,
Wealthiest of rivers! though in days of old
I loved thee where thy waters sylvan roll'd,
And still would fancy thee in part the same
As love perversely clings to some old mate
Estranged by fortune; in his very pride
Seems lifted; waxes in his greatness great;
And silent hails the lot it prophesied:
Content to think in manhood's palmy state
Some ling'ring traces of the child abide.

Our business, however, is not with the mighty Thames—the "wealthiest of rivers" —but with the pleasant and pastoral Kennet.

One of the most romantic spots that it touches in its progress is a fisherman's cottage, on the estate of my friend Colonel Talbot, who, amongst his large manorial property possesses a right of fishery for some mile or two up the river—a right which, like other manorial possessions, combines a good deal of trouble with its pleasure and its dignity, and obliges the colonel to keep up a sort of river police for the defence of his watery demesnes. This police consists of Adam Stokes, the fisherman, of his follower, Gilbert, and his boy Ned Gilbert, who is, after all, but semi-aquatic, and belongs in "division tripartite" to the park-keeper, the gamekeeper, and the fisherman, waging fierce war with the poachers in each of his vocations, one night in defence of the deer, the next of the pheasants, and the third of the pike. Gilbert, who in right of his terrene avocations wears a green livery and a gold-laced hat, is by no means a regular inhabitant of the cottage by the Kennet side, but may be found quite as frequently up at the park, sometimes at the dog-kennel, sometimes in the servants' hall, leaving the river to the efficient watchfulness of its amphibious guardians, Adam Stokes, the boy Ned, and their dog Neptune, who, excepting when Adam was attracted by the charms of a stronger liquid to the tap-room of the Four Horseshoes, were seldom seen half a furlong from their proper element.

Adam was a man fit to encounter poachers by land or by water—a giant of a man with more than a giant's strength, and without the gentleness which so often accompanies conscious power: he knew his full force, and delighted in its exhibition. The unwieldy boat was in his brawny hands a child's toy, and the heavy oar a bulrush. Bold was the poacher that dared to encounter Adam Stokes! His very voice, loud as that of a boatswain,

* We violate no confidence, and commit no impropriety, in now stating that the name is that of a gentleman whose genius and literary accomplishments add lustre to the English Bar — Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, C. J. J., 1845.

was sufficient to awe any common ruffian, and the bold, bluff, weather-beaten visage, keen eye, and fearless bearing, were in excellent keeping with tones that seemed at their quietest as if issuing from a speaking-trumpet. His dress beseemed his person and his occupation — boots that might bid defiance to mud or water, a blue jacket that had borne many a storm, and an old sealskin cap, surmounting his shaggy black hair, formed his general equipment. Add a quid of tobacco rolling from side to side of a capacious mouth, a beard of a fortnight's growth, a knowing wink, and an uncouth but good-humoured grin, and you will have a tolerable notion of the outer man of Master Adam.

His inward qualities were pretty much what might be expected from such an exterior—rude, rough, and coarse, but faithful, bold, and honest, and not without a certain touch of fun and good fellowship, and blunt kindness, that rendered him no small favourite with his cronies of the Four Horseshoes, amongst whom his waterman's songs, and sailor's stories, (yarns, as he called them,) were deservedly popular. His early history was rather a puzzle in the good village of Aberleigh. He had been brought by Colonel Talbot to his present situation about ten years back, a stranger in the neighbourhood; and little as in general Adam affected concealment, he appeared to have some amusement in mystifying his neighbours on this point. Never were opinions more various. Some held that he had been a London waterman, and quoted his songs, his dexterity at the oar, and his familiarity with the slang peculiar to the great river, as irrefragable proofs that such had been his vocation. Others asserted that he was an old man-of-war's man, citing his long yarns, his proficiency in making and drinking grog, his boldness in battle, and his hatred of the Monsieurs, as convincing testimony in their favour. Others again (but they were his maligners) hinted that well as he liked grog, a drop of neat Cogniac was still more welcome, and insinuated that some of the yarns had about them a great air of smuggling;—whilst another party, more malevolent still, asserted that boldness might belong to other trades as well as to a sailor, and that his skill as a fisherman, and such a subtlety in detecting nets and lines, as had never before been met with in these parts, savoured strongly of his having at some time or other followed the poaching business himself. This last, in particular, was the observation of his next neighbour, Nanny Sims, a washerwoman, and gossip of high repute, who being a thriving widow of some forty, or belike forty-five, had on his first arrival set her cap, as the phrase is, at Adam, and, in affront at his neglect of her charms, was in a small way as comfortably his enemy as heart could desire.

Little recked he of her love or her enmity. On he lived, a bold, bluff, burly bachelor, with his boy Ned, and his dog Neptune, each, after his several way, as burly and shaggy as himself, the terror of water-thieves, and the prime favourite of his master, who, a thorough sportsman, and altogether one of the most complete and admirable specimens that I have ever known of an English country gentleman, refined by education and travel, set the highest value on his skill as a fisher, and his good management in preserving the fishery. A first-rate favourite was Adam Stokes.

His habitation was, as I have said, beautifully situated at a point of the Kennet where, winding suddenly round an abrupt hill, it flowed beneath a bank so high and precipitous, that but for its verdure it might have passed for a cliff, leaving just room on the bank for a small white cottage, the chimneys of which were greatly over-topped by the woody ridge behind them, while the garden on one side sloped in natural terraces from the hill to the river, and a narrow orchard on the other was planted ledge above ledge, like a vineyard on the Rhine. Fishing-nets drying on the fine smooth turf, and the boat fastened to a post and swaying in the water, completed the picture.

An unfrequented country road on the other side of the river was my nearest way to Talbot Park, and one day last March, driving thither in my little pony-phaeton, I stopped to observe Adam, who had just caught an enormous pike, weighing, as we afterwards found, above twenty pounds, and after landing it on one side of the water, was busied in repairing a part of his tackle which the struggles of the creature had broken. It was still full of life as it lay on the grass, and appeared to me such a load, that after complimenting Adam (who was of my acquaintance) on the luck that had sent, and the skill that had caught, such a fish, I offered to take it for him to the Park.

"Lord bless you, ma'am!" responded Master Stokes, eyeing my slight equipage, and pretty pony, as well as the small lad who was driving me, with some slyness, "Lord

help you, ma'am, you've no notion how obstropulous these great fishes be. He'd splash your silk gown all over, and mayhap overset you into the bargain. No, no — I've catched him, and I must manage him — besides, I want to speak to madam. Here, lad," added he, calling to his boy, who, with Neptune, was standing on the opposite side of the river, watching our colloquy, "gather them violets on the bank; they're always the first in the country; and bring the basket over in the boat to take this fellow to the great house—mind how you pick the flowers, you lubber, I want 'em for madam."

Somewhat amused by seeing how my fair friend's passion for flowers was understood and humoured, even by the roughest of her dependents, I pursued my way to the house, passed the pretty lodge and the magnificent garden, with its hothouses, greenhouses, and conservatories, its fountains and its basins, its broad walks and shady alleys; drove through the noble park, with its grand masses of old forest-trees — oak, and beech, and elm, and tree-like thorns, the growth of centuries; thridded the scattered clumps, about which the dappled deer were lying; skirted the clear lakelet, where water-fowl of all sorts were mingled with stately swans; and finally gained the house, a superb mansion worthy of its grounds, at the door of which I met the colonel, who, pheasant-shooting, and hunting, and coursing, being fairly over, intended to solace himself with shooting rabbits, and was sallying forth with his gun in his hand, and a train of long-bodied, crooked-legged, very outlandish-looking dogs at his heels, of a sort called the rabbit-beagle, reckoned very handsome I find in their way, but in my mind pre-eminently ugly. I did not, however, affront my kind host, a person whom every body likes, in right of his frank, open, amiable character, and his delightful manners; I did not insult him by abusing his dogs, but passing with a gracious salutation, we parted — he to his sport, and I to my visit.

If Colonel Talbot be a delightful man, Mrs. Talbot is a thrice delightful woman. To say nothing of the higher qualities for which she is deservedly eminent, I have seldom met with any one who contrives to be at the same time so charming and so witty. She is very handsome, too, and combining her own full-blown and magnificent beauty with her love of that full-blown and beautiful flower, I call her the Queen of the Dahlias, — a nickname which she submits to the more readily, as her collection of that superb plant is nearly unrivalled. In March, however, even she, great forcer though she be, can hardly force a dahlia, so that I found her in her drawing-room without her favourite flower, but surrounded by stands of rhododendrons, azaleas, daphnes, pinks, lilies of the valley, and roses without end; and after first admiring and then deprecating her display of forced plants, as forestalling their natural blossoming, and deadening the summer pleasure, quoting to the same effect Shakspere's fine lines in the *Love's Labour Lost* —

> At Christmas I no more desire a rose
> Than look for snow in May's newfangled shows,
> But like of each thing that in season grows.*

After a little battle on this, an old subject of dispute between us, we fell into talk on other topics, and I soon perceived that my charming hostess was not in her usual spirits.

"But what's the matter, my dear Mrs. Talbot? You say that all friends are well; and I see that the flowers are prosperous in spite of my lecture; and the pets, — pussy purring on the sofa, the swans sailing on the water, and the pied peacock tapping the window at this very moment; — the pets are flourishing like the flowers. What can have happened to vex you?"

"Enough to have disturbed the patience of Grisildis herself, if Grisildis had ever known the comfort of a favourite waiting-maid. Laurette has given me warning."

"Laurette! Is it possible! The paragon of *filles de chambre*! the princess of milliners! the very queen of the toilet! Laurette, so dexterous, so handy, she that could do not only all that was possible to waiting-women, but all that was impossible! and so attached too! what can be the cause? who can have stolen her from you?"

"She's going to be married!"

"To whom?"

"Heaven knows! she would not tell me his name, but described him as 'un brave garçon.' Somebody in the village, I fancy! some lout of a farmer, or bumpkin of a carpenter. She that cannot speak three words of English, and is as unfit for a farmer's wife as I am. To think of my losing Laurette."

* Perhaps in this argument Mrs. Talbot is right and I am wrong; for we can hardly have too many roses. But those parents and instructors who force the delicate plants called children into precocious blossoming, cannot enough study the deep wisdom of the concluding line.

At this point of our dialogue, Master Adam Stokes was announced, and we adjourned into the hall to admire the fish and talk to the fisherman. There stood Adam, cap in hand, more shaggy and ragged than ever, exulting over his enormous fish, and backed by his adherents, Ned and Neptune, whilst the airy Frenchwoman, tricked out as usual in her silk gown, her embroidered apron, her high comb, and her large earrings, stood against a marble table arranging the violets which Ned had brought in a small China cup. I must go to her own language for words to describe the favourite French maid —*gentille et jolie* seem expressly made for her, and as she stood with an air of consciousness quite unusual to her manner, placing the violets topsy-turvey in her confusion, I thought that I had never seen Laurette half so attractive. Her lady took no notice of her, but remained in gracious colloquy with the fisherman. At last she turned towards the drawing-room.

"If you please, ma'am," said Adam, "I'd be greatly obliged to you, if you'd speak a good word for me to his honour." And there he stopped.

"What about, Adam?" inquired Mrs. Talbot, returning to the middle of the hall.

"About my marrying, ma'am; if so be the Colonel has no objection;" continued Adam, twirling his cap.

"Marrying!" rejoined Mrs. Talbot, "all the world seems thinking of marrying! who is the fair lady, Adam? Nanny Sims?"

"Nanny Sims! not she, indeed, ma'am," resumed Master Stokes. "I don't know who would trouble their heads about such an old hulk, when they might be master of such a tight-made vessel as this!" quoth the fisherman, grinning and jerking his head, and clutching the gown of the pretty Frenchwoman, whilst his faithful adherents, Ned and Neptune, grinned, and jerked, and wagged head and tail in unison.

"Laurette! do you mean Laurette! you who hate the French, and she who can't speak English?"

"A fig for her lingo, ma'am. Look what a tight little frigate 'tis! A fig for her lingo!"

"Et toi, Laurette! es tu folle?"

"Ah de grace, madame! c'est un si brave garçon!" And outrageous as the union seemed, as incongruous as a match between Caliban and Ariel, the lovers persevered, and the lady, half-provoked and half-amused, consented; and at the month's end they were married, with as fair a prospect of happiness as any couple in the parish.

PART II.

ADAM STOKES IN HIS MARRIED STATE.

When last I had seen Master Stokes the fisherman, in his bachelor condition, it was in the week when February ends and March begins, when the weather was as bluff and boisterous as his own bluff and boisterous self; when the velvet buds were just sprouting on the sallow, the tufted tassels hanging from the hazel, and the early violet and "rathe primrose" peeping timidly forth from sunny banks and sheltered crevices, as if still half afraid to brave the stormy sky.

The next time that I passed by the banks of the Kennet was in the lovely season which just precedes the merry month of May. The weather was soft and balmy, the sky bright above, the earth fair below; the turf by the road-side was powdered with daisies, the budding hedgerows gay with the white ochil, the pansy, and the wild geranium; the orchards hung with their own garlands of fruit blossoms, waving over seas of golden daffodils; the coppices tapestried with pansies, ground-ivy, and wood-anemone, whilst patches of the delicate wood-sorrel were springing under the holly brake and from the roots of old beech-trees; and the meadows were literally painted with cowslips, orchises, the brilliant flowers of the water-ranunculus, the chequered fritillary, and the enamelled wild hyacinth. The river went dancing and sparkling along, giving back in all its freshness the tender green of the landscape, and the bright and sunny sky; birds were singing in every bush; bees and butterflies were on the wing, and myriads of water-insects added their pleasant sound to the general harmony of nature. It was Spring in all its loveliness, and never is Spring more lovely than in our Kennet meadows.

The Fisherman's hut did not disgrace the beauty of the picture. The white cottage, nested in the green bank, with its hanging garden full of stocks and wall-flowers, its blooming orchard, and its thin wreath of gray smoke sailing up the precipitous hill, and lost amid the overhanging trees, looked like the very emblem of peace and comfort. Adam and his dog Neptune were standing in the boat, which Master Stokes's stout arm was pushing from shore with a long pole, nodding a farewell to his wife, and roaring at the top of his stentorian voice his

favourite stave of "Rule Britannia;" Laurette, on her part, was seated at the open door of the cottage, trim as a bride, with her silk gown, her large earrings, her high comb, and her pretty apron, her dress contrasting strangely with her employment, which was no other than darning her husband's ponderous and unwieldy hose, but with a face radiant with happiness and gaiety, as her light and airy voice sung the light and airy burden of a song in high favour among the *soubrettes* of Paris.

> C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour,
> Qui fait le monde a la ronde;
> Et chaque jour, a son tour,
> Le monde fait l'amour.

"C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour," came ringing across the water in every pause of her husband's mighty and patriotic chant, mingled with the shrill notes of Ned, who was bird's-nesting on the hill-side, peeping into every furze-bush for the five-speckled eggs of the gray linnet, and whistling "Oh no, we never mention her," with all his might.

It was a curious combination, certainly, and yet one that seemed to me to give token of much happiness; and on questioning my friend Mrs. Talbot, the charming Queen of the Dahlias * frankly admitted, that however it might turn out eventually, Laurette's match did at present appear to have produced more comfort to both parties than could have been anticipated from so preposterous a union. "Adam adores her," pursued Mrs. Talbot, "spends all the money he can come by in sailor-like finery, red ribbons, and yellow gowns, which Laurette has too good a wardrobe to need, and too much taste to wear; can't pass within a yard of her without a loving pinch of her pretty round cheek, and swears by every seaman's oath that ever was invented, that she's the neatest-built vessel, with the comeliest figure-head that ever was launched. And, incredible as it seems, Laurette loves him; delights in his rough kindness, his boldness, and his honesty; calls him still *un brave garçon;* enters into his humour; studies his comfort; has learnt more English during her six weeks' marriage than in six years that she lived with me; and has even advanced so far as to approach, as nearly as a French tongue may do, to the pronunciation of her own name, Stokes — a terrible trial to Gallic organs. In short," continued Mrs. Talbot, "of a very foolish thing, it has turned out better than might have been expected; Adam's adherents, Ned and Neptune, fairly idolise their new mistress; poor thing, her kindness, and good-nature, and gaiety, were always most delightful; and Ned is, she assures me, a very handy boy in the house, does all the dirty work, dusts and scrubs, and washes, and cooks, and trots about in a pair of high pattens and a checked apron, just exactly like a maid of all-work. I send Gilbert to her almost every day with one trifle or another, sometimes a basket of provisions, sometimes my reversionary flowers, (for Laurette can't live without flowers,) and, on the whole, I really think she will do very well."

This account was most satisfactory; but happening again to pass Laurette's cottage in the bowery month of June, I saw cause to fear that a change had passed over the pretty Frenchwoman's prospects. Outwardly the picture was as bright, or brighter, than ever. It was summer—gay, smiling summer. The hawthorn-buds in the hedgerows were exchanged for the full-blown blossoms of the wayfaring-tree,† whose double circle of white stars, regular as if cut with a stamp, forms so beautiful a cluster of flowerets, and contrasts so gaily with the deep pink of the wild rose, and the pale, but graceful garlands of the woodbine; the meadows had, indeed, lost their flowery glory, and were covered partly with rich swathes of new-cut grass, and partly with large haycocks, dappling the foreground with such depth and variety of light and shadow; but the river's edge was gay as a garden with flags and water-lilies, and the pendent bunches of the delicate snowflake, the most elegant of aquatic plants; and Laurette's garden itself, one bright bed of pinks, and roses, and honeysuckles, and berry-bushes, with their rich transparent fruit, might almost have vied in colour and fragrance with that of her mistress. The change was not in the place, but in the inhabitants.

Adam was employed in landing a net full of fish, perch, roach, and dace, such a haul as ought to have put any fisherman into

* She has fairly taken to the title, as witness a note which I have received from her, signed, "Dahlia Regina."

† For some charming stanzas to the Wayfaring-tree (remarkable also for its dark, currant-shaped leaf, with a pale cottony lining, which produces a singular effect when turned up by the wind) — for some admirable verses to this elegant wild shrub, see Mr. Howitt's *Book of the Seasons*, one of the most interesting and delightful works on natural history that has appeared since White's *Selborne*.

good humour, but which certainly had had no such effect on the present occasion. He looked as black as a thunder-cloud, swore at the poor fish as he tossed them on the bank, called Ned a lubber, and when, in a fit of absence, he from mere habit resumed his patriotic ditty, shouted, "Britons never will be slaves," with such a scowl at his poor foreign wife, that it could only be interpreted into a note of defiance. She, on her side, was still working at her cottage-door, or rather sitting there listlessly with her work (a checked shirt of her churlish husband's) in her lap, her head drooping, and the gay air of "C'est l'amour," exchanged for a plaintive romance, which ran, as well as I could catch it, something in this fashion :—

Celui qui sut toucher mon cœur,
Jurait d'aimer toute la vie,
Mais, hélas ! c'était un trompeur,
Celui qui sut toucher mon cœur.

S'il abjurait cruelle erreur,
S'il revenait à son amie,
Ah ! toujours il serait vainqueur,
S'il abjurait cruelle erreur.

And when the romance was done, which might have touched Adam's heart, if he could but have understood it, poor Laurette sighed amain, took up the checked shirt, and seemed likely to cry; Neptune looked doleful, as one who comprehended that something was the matter, but could not rightly understand what; and Ned was in the dumps. A dreary change had come over the whole family, of which the cause was not known to me for some time afterwards :— Adam was jealous.

The cause of this jealousy was no other than the quondam candidate for the fisherman's favour, his prime aversion, Nanny Sims.

This Nanny Sims was, as I have said, a washerwoman, and Adam's next neighbour, she tenanting a cottage and orchard on the same side of the river, but concealed from observation by the romantic and precipitous bank which formed so picturesque a background to Laurette's pretty dwelling. In person, Nanny was as strong a contrast to the light and graceful Frenchwoman as could well be imagined; she being short and stout, and blowsy and frowsy, realizing exactly, as to form, Lord Byron's expression, "a dumpy woman," and accompanying it with all the dowdiness and slovenliness proper to her station. Never was even washerwoman more untidy. A cap all rags, from which the hair came straggling in elf-locks over a face which generally looked red-hot, surmounted by an old bonnet, originally black, now rusty, and so twisted into crooks and bends that its pristine shape was unguessable; a coloured cotton handkerchief pinned over a short-sleeved, open, stuff gown, and three or four aprons, each wet through, tied one above another, black stockings, men's shoes, and pattens higher and noisier than ever pattens were, completed her apparel.

Her habits were such as suited her attire and her condition. An industrious woman, it must be confessed, was Nanny Sims. Give her green tea, and strong beer, and gin at discretion, and she would wash the four-and-twenty hours round, only abstracting an hour apiece for her two breakfasts, ditto ditto for her two luncheons, two hours for her dinner, one for her afternoon's tea, and another for supper. And then she would begin again, and dry, and starch, and mangle, and iron, without let or pause, save those demanded by the above-mentioned refections. Give her gin enough, and she never seemed to require the gentle refreshment called sleep. Sancho's fine ejaculation, "Blessed is the man that invented sleep!" with which most mortals have so entire a sympathy, would have been thrown away upon Nanny Sims. The discoverer of the still would have been the fitter object of her benediction. Gin, sheer gin, was to her what ale was to Boniface; and she throve upon it. Never was woman so invulnerable to disease. Hot water was her element, and she would go seething and steaming from the wash-tub, reeking and dripping from top to toe, into the keenest north-east wind, without taking more harm than the wet sheets and tablecloths which went through her hands. They dried and so did she; and to all feeling of inconvenience that parboiled and soddened flesh seemed as inaccessible as the linen.

A hardworking woman was Nanny — but the part of her that worked hardest was her tongue. Benedick's speech to Beatrice, "I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer," gives but a faint notion of the activity of that member in the mouth of our laundress. If ever mechanical contrivance had approached half so nearly to the perpetual motion, the inventor would have considered the problem as solved, and would have proclaimed the discovery accordingly. It was one incessant wag. Of course, the tongue was a washerwoman's tongue, and the chatter such as might suit the accompaniments of the wash-tub and the gin-bottle, not forgetting that important accessory to scandal in higher walks of life, the tea-

table. The pendulum vibrated through every degree and point of gossiping, from the most innocent matter-of-fact, to the most malicious slander, and was the more mischievous, as, being employed to assist the laundry-maid in several families, as well as taking in washing at home, her powers of collecting and diffusing false reports were by no means inconsiderable. She was the general tale-bearer of the parish, and scattered dissension as the wind scatters the thistle-down, sowing the evil seed in all directions. What added to the danger of her lies was, that they were generally interwoven with some slender and trivial thread of truth, which gave something like the colour of fact to her narrative, and that her legends were generally delivered in a careless undesigning style, as if she spoke from the pure love of talking, and did not care whether you believed her or not, which had a strong, but unconscious effect on the credulity of her auditors. Perhaps, to a certain extent, she might be innocent of ill-intention, and might not, on common occasions, mean to do harm by her evil-speaking; but, in the case of Laurette, I can hardly acquit her of malice. She hated her for all manner of causes: as her next neighbour; as a Frenchwoman; as pretty; as young; as fine; as the favourite of Mrs. Talbot; and last, and worst, as the wife of Adam Stokes; and she omitted no opportunity of giving vent to her spite.

First, she said that she was idle; then, that she was proud; then, that she was sluttish; then, that she was extravagant; then, that she was vain; then, that she rouged; then, that she wore a wig; then, that she was by no means so young as she wished to be thought; and then, that she was ugly. These shafts fell wide of the mark. People had only to look at the pretty, smiling Laurette, and at her neat cottage, and they were disproved at a glance. At last, Nanny, over the wash-tub at the Park, gave out that Laurette was coquettish; and that she would have Master Adam look about him; that honest English husbands who married French wives, and young wives, and pretty wives into the bargain, had need to look about them; that she, for her part, was very sorry for her worthy neighbour—but, that folks who lived near, saw more than other folks thought for, and then Nanny sighed and held her tongue. Nanny's holding her tongue produced a wonderful sensation in the Park laundry; such an event had never occurred there before; it was thought that the cause of her speechlessness must be something most portentous and strange, and questions were rained upon her from all quarters.

For an incredible space of time (at least two minutes) Nanny maintained a resolute silence, shook her head, and said nothing. At last, in pure confidence, she disclosed to five women, the laundry-maid, the dairy-maid, two house-maids, and another charwoman, the important fact, that it was not for nothing that Gilbert carried a basket every day from Mrs. Talbot to Laurette; that her husband, poor man, had not found it out yet, but that, doubtless, his eyes would be opened some day or other; that she did not blame Gilbert so much, poor fellow, the chief advances being made by the foreign madam, who had said to her, in her jargon, that she should be dead if the basket did not come every day, meaning, no doubt, if he did not bring the basket; and that all the world would see what would come of it. Then, recommending secrecy, which all parties promised, Nanny put on her shawl, and her pattens, and trudged home; and before night the whole house knew of it, and before the next day, the whole parish—the only exceptions being, perhaps, Laurette herself, and Colonel and Mrs. Talbot, who were, as great people generally are, happily ignorant of the nonsense talked in their own kitchen.

Two persons, at all events, heard the story, with as many circumstantial additions as the tale of the three black crows—and those two were Adam Stokes, whom it made as jealous as Othello, upon somewhat the same course of reasoning, and Gilbert himself, who, something of a rural coxcomb, although no practised seducer, began at last to believe that what every body said must be partly true, that though he himself were perfectly guiltless of love, the fair lady might have had the misfortune to be smitten with his personal good gifts, (for Gilbert was a well-looking, ruddy swain, of some nineteen or twenty, the very age when young lads confide in the power of their own attractions,) and to make up his mind to fall in love with her out of gratitude.

Accordingly, he began to court Laurette at every opportunity; and Laurette, who, in spite of her French education, had no notion that an Englishman's wife could be courted by any body but her husband, and whose comprehension of the language was still too vague to enable her to understand him thoroughly, continued to treat him with her

usual friendly kindness, the less inclined to make any observation on his conduct, since she was altogether engrossed by the moodiness of her husband, who had suddenly changed from the most loving to the most surly of mortals. Laurette tried to sooth and pacify him, but the more she strove against his ill-humour, the worse it grew, and the poor young Frenchwoman at last took to singing melancholy songs, and sighing, and drooping, and hanging her head like a bereaved turtledove. It was in this state that I saw her.

Matters were now advancing towards a crisis. Gilbert saw Laurette's dejection, and, imputing it to a hopeless passion for himself, ventured to send her a *billet-doux*, written by Colonel Talbot's valet, (for although he had learnt to write at a national school, he had already contrived to forget his unpractised lesson,) which, in terms fine enough for a valet himself, requested her to honour him with a private interview at the stile, by the towing-path, at nine in the evening, when Adam would be away.

This English, which was too fine to be good—that is to say, to be idiomatic, proved more intelligible to Laurette than his previous declarations, although aided by all the eloquence of eyes. She, however, resolved to take further advice on the occasion, and showed the epistle to Ned.

"What is this writing here?" said Laurette. "What will it say?"

"It is a love-letter, Mrs. Stokes," answered Ned.

"What does it want?" questioned Mrs. Stokes; "me to give a rendezvous at de stile?"

"Yes," rejoined Ned; "you to go to the stile."

"De people is mad!" exclaimed poor Laurette. "Dere's your masterre—"

"Master's jealous!" cried Ned.

"And dis wicked man?"

"He's in love!"

"De people is fools!" exclaimed poor Laurette. "De people is mad! But I'll go to de stile—and Nède, you and Nèpe shall go too."—And so it was settled.

Nine o'clock came, and the party set off. And about five minutes past nine Nanny Sims met Adam near the towing-path.

"Do you want your wife, Master Stokes?" quoth the crone. "Are you looking for Gilbert? I saw them both but now, one a little way on this side of the stile, the other a little beyond. They'll have met by this time." And without pausing for an answer, on she went.

Adam pursued his walk with furious strides, and paused as he came within sight of the place, considering in which way he had best announce his presence. The supposed lovers had not yet met; but in an instant Gilbert jumped over the stile, and caught hold of Laurette; and in another instant the active Frenchwoman escaped from his arms, gave him a box on the ear that almost upset him, called to "Nède" and "Nepe," both which trusty adherents lay in ambush by the way side, and poured forth such a flood of scolding in French and broken English, mingled with occasional cuffs, the dog barking and Ned laughing the whilst, that the discomfited gallant fairly took to his heels, and fled. In his way, however, he encountered Adam, who, without wasting a word upon the matter, took him up in one hand and flung him into the Kennet.

"A ducking 'ill do him no harm," quoth Adam: "he can swim like a fish—and if I catch Nanny Sims, I'll give her a taste of cold water, too," added the fisherman, hugging his pretty wife, who was now sobbing on his bosom; "and I deserve to be ducked myself for mistrusting of thee, like a landlubber; but if ever I sarve thee so again," continued he, straining her to his honest bosom—"if ever I sarve thee so again, may I have a round dozen the next minute, and be spliced to Nanny Sims into the bargain."

THE STORY OF MARTHA GUINNIS AND HER SON

BY MRS. CROWE, AUTHOR OF "SUSAN HOPLEY," &c.

CHAPTER I.

It was nearly midnight, and Martha Guinnis began to think that John, her husband, who had gone that morning to the races at D——, was going to do what he very seldom did, namely, spend the night from home. She had for some time felt extremely sleepy, and ever and anon her head nodded over the large family Bible that lay open before her. She had a mind to go to bed; but, as her room was not on the same side

of the house as the door, she was afraid she might not hear John if he did come home, and her son and the maid had both been long in bed. So she resolved to wait till half past twelve, but, before the half hour had expired, she was fast asleep; and it was one o'clock when the sound of her husband's heavy stick upon the door roused her with a start from her nap.

"M ! John, how late you are," said she, with a yawn, as she opened the door; "why, I thought you were not coming at all!"

"And I'd like not to have come at all either," said John, in a sharp, quick tone, that denoted dissatisfaction with himself or somebody else.

"Why, what's the matter?" said Martha, taking the alarm; "you haven't been robbed, I hope?"

"Yes, I have," returned John. "Dang it!" added he, striking the table with his fist, "that ever I should be such an ass!"

"Why, what have you done? You haven't been losing your money, have you?"

"Yes, I have," answered John, sulkily.

"There, now!" exclaimed Martha, "didn't I tell you so? Wasn't I as sure as eggs are eggs, that if you went to D—— you wouldn't be able to keep from betting? and you know very well, John, you are no more judge of a horse than I am."

"Aren't I?" said John, in a tone of irritation. for this is an impeachment no man can endure with patience.

"No, to be sure you're not," replied the wife; "didn't you give ten pounds for Collier's old mare, that had got the glanders, and wasn't worth ten shillings?"

"It's very lucky for you I did, I'm sure," said John, sharply, "for it's helped you to something to fling in my teeth ever since."

"Well, and isn't it enough to make one," answered Martha; "to see a man such a fool, meddling with what he knows nothing about? And, pray, how much have you lost?"

"It isn't so much what I've lost—though that's bad enough, to be sure—as the way I lost it," returned Guinnis; "dang it! that I should be such a Johnny Raw!"

"Why, whose horse did you bet on?" asked Martha.

"On the Duke's colt," answered John.

"My! what a fool to bet on that young thing that had never run before! But it's just like you. And which won?"

"Why, the colt won," answered John, doggedly.

"The colt won! Then how could you lose?" asked Martha.

"I didn't lose; I won the bet," replied John; "but I was bit by a rascal—one of them Lunnun chaps—there was three or four of 'em there, with a parcel of flash notes in their pockets—"

"What! you weren't such a fool as to take one of their notes, were you?" exclaimed Martha.

"Yes, I was," returned John; "and to give change for it too. I knew fast enough the colt was to win—I heard it in the Duke's stables as I went along—so when a swell looking chap came up and offered me two guineas to one against him, I was down upon it at once—'Done!' says I; but he was deeper than I was."

"And what did you give him?" asked Martha, her cheek flushing with vexation.

"Three guineas," said John; "and that —— rag's all I got for it;" and so saying he drew a very good-looking five pound note from his pocket, and threw it on the table.

"Are you sure it's a bad one?" inquired Martha. "It looks very good."

"Of course, I'm sure," answered John. "Wasn't I like to be taken up at Blake's for offering it in payment? Blake was away at the races, and the young man in the shop didn't know me; and when he saw the note was a bad one, he took me for a swindler, and was as near as possible sending for the constable; only that luckily Blake's sister came in and stopt him."

"But how did he know it was bad," asked Martha, curiously examining the note.

"Because some of the same sort had been passed upon the course yesterday," replied John; "and Blake had shown one to the lad to put him on his guard."

"How unlucky!" said Martha.

"What?" said John, sharply.

"Well, I'm sure Blake could afford to lose it better than we could," answered Martha.

"Fie, woman!" said John; "you wouldn't have me pass bad money, would you?"

"But if you hadn't known it, nobody could have blamed *you*, you know."

"I must pay for my own folly," answered John; "there's no reason any body else should pay for it that I know of."

"Three guineas!" said Martha, "and two that you won—there's five guineas gone through your stupidity. Didn't you try to find the fellow that cheated you?"

"To be sure I did. That's what kept me

so late. I went back to the course, and searched for him in every direction; and then, when evening came, I went to all the inns and public-houses in D——, but devil a bit could I see of him!"

"How provoking!" exclaimed Martha, still fingering the note.

"Put it in the fire! put it in the fire!" said John. "It's the only place it's fit for!"

"I can't think how any body could tell it was bad," observed Martha. "I'm sure I shouldn't know it."

"Then you can't blame me for not knowing it," said John.

"That's a different thing," said Martha. "If a man will bet with people he knows nothing about on a race-course, he should look to what he takes from them. If this wasn't the last day of the races, you might, perhaps, have caught him to-morrow."

"But it is the last day," replied John, rising and preparing to go to bed.

"Well," said Martha, rising also, and approaching the fire, "I can hardly find in my heart to burn what looks so like a good five pounds."

"Put it in the fire!" said John, "and let's go to bed. It's two o'clock, and I must have my breakfast at seven, for I've got to be at the Grange by eight, about the hay."

"Will Squire Walter buy all the crop?" inquired Martha.

"I hope he will; he said as much yesterday," answered John, as he left the room, again bidding his wife put the note in the fire, and come to bed.

The door closed on the husband; the wife stood on the hearth, with the note in her hand: she looked at the fire, and she looked at the note. Clearly, it was her duty to burn it; but then, as she said, it did look so like a good five pounds, and the day might come that five pounds would be so useful to her; and really she did not see how any body, unless their suspicions were on the alert, could possibly know this to be a bad one; and, as these ideas floated through her mind, she slowly smoothed out the note, and then she folded it; and, finally, she deposited it between the leaves of the Bible, which still lay open on the table; resolving that there was no necessity for being in a hurry about it; and that it would be quite time enough to burn it on the following morning. But the following morning brought its usual occupations; and although, as she passed to and fro in the exercise of her household cares, her eye involuntarily glanced to where the Bible lay, on a small round table in the corner, she persuaded herself that she was too busy just then to attend to the matter, and that the evening would be time enough. But the day happened to be Saturday, and as she had a great deal to do, it was ten o'clock at night before she had leisure to take her usual seat by the fire-side. When she did so, John was sitting half asleep on the other side of the hearth.

"Come, old woman," said he, lifting up his head, "give us a chapter, and let's go to bed!" for it had been a custom, ever since they were married, for Martha to read a chapter, the last thing before they retired. So she rose and fetched the Bible; and, as she turned over the leaves, she saw the note. Her eye glanced up at John; but, weary with the fatigues of the day, and the late hours of the preceding one, his eyelids were drooping, and his head hanging on his breast: so she turned on to the lessons of the day, and lifted up her voice and read.

On that night, after her husband had retired to bed, Martha withdrew the note from between the leaves of the Bible, and deposited it where it was never likely to meet any eye but her own; namely, in an antique silver tea-pot, which had been left her by an aunt; and which had reposed, in unseen dignity, at the bottom of an old bureau, ever since it came into her possession; and, from that time, Martha Guinnis persuaded herself that she forgot the note. It was true, indeed, that she never deliberately indulged herself with reflections on the subject of its existence; but, for all that, she knew it was there; and, for a long time, she never went to the bureau without recollecting it. There it was—a *felt*, rather than an acknowledged resource, in case of emergency. Gradually, however, the idea became less vivid, the emergency did not arise; and, at length, it lived only in her unawakened memory, sleeping till some unexpected event, or association of ideas, should recal it.

Five years had elapsed, and John Guinnis waxed old and infirm; he had been a hard working man, and his age told upon him; and it now became a question between the husband and wife, whether it would not be advisable to bring home their only son, William, to manage their little farm for them. This darling of the mother's heart, and indeed of the father's too, had been sent away to learn his business elsewhere; because he was too wild to be kept at home, where his mother

spoilt him, and his father could not manage him. He had betrayed no particular disposition to vice; but he was thoughtless, self-willed, and fond of pleasure; and needed what is called a tight hand to keep him in. So they sent him to a tolerably flourishing farmer, of the name of Edmunds, whose rigour, with respect to his own children, was looked upon as exemplary; and there he had been for three years, conforming pretty well to the rules set up by the head of the establishment; without however losing his character for irregularity. Martha, who had unequivocally regretted his departure, and but slowly acquiesced in it, now argued eagerly in favour of his return. John said, "If I were but sure he 'd be steady," and wished him to stay away a couple of years longer; but Martha urged that he was now two-and-twenty, and that besides their own great need of him, it was not fair to leave their only boy, "and such a fine young fellow as William too," to be tyrannized over by Edmunds: if Edmunds was a tyrant to his own flesh and blood, what would he be to theirs; besides, he 'd be falling in love with one of Edmunds's daughters, if he staid there much longer: and whilst it was quite certain Edmunds would never consent to the match, it would disappoint their hopes of marrying him to his cousin Helen, who had a nice little fortune of five hundred pounds ready for his acceptance; for Helen had liked William from her childhood. This last argument was decisive, and William was sent for.

In spite of his misgivings, John Guinnis felt very happy to see his son at home again, and felt very proud of him too; for he was, indeed, as Martha said, a very fine young fellow; and cousin Helen, who was there to meet him, showed her heart in her eyes, and flung blushing roses into her fair young cheeks to welcome him. A close observer might have thought William less joyous than the rest of the party; but he smiled gently, showing the finest set of teeth in the world, which fascinated Helen; his mother was bewitched with the manly form, and dark curling whiskers, which nature had elaborated since she had last seen him; whilst the anxious John was delighted by the low voice and subdued demeanour, which he looked upon as indications of a thorough reform. He arrived on the Saturday evening; and, on Sunday morning, Helen leant upon his arm as she trod the accustomed path to church; blushing and smiling, and looking eagerly up in his face, as if the better to understand what he was saying; but, in fact, to drink in deep draughts of love from his eyes—not from his lips, for they spoke no syllable of love; but his eyes were of that dangerous quality, that they could not look into a woman's without melting into softness.

William now took the management of the farm, at least the active duties of it, under his father; whilst John reserved to himself the financial department, and indulged his increasing infirmities with a larger share of repose. Martha was proud and happy; and Helen, who was encouraged by the old people to be much at the house, grew daily more and more in love; whilst, gradually, the young man's lips, as well as eyes, began to testify, that his heart was not insensible to her merits and affection.

Thus some months passed away without any remarkable occurrence, when one evening, William asked his father to allow him to spend the next day from home. He said he had a letter informing him, that some of the young Edmundses were to be at N——, the county town, and that he wanted to go over and meet them. After a little demur at the loss of time, the old man consented; and, on the following morning, with the dawn of day, the young man started on foot. The distance he had to walk was about fifteen miles, but his mind was so engrossed, and he strode over the ground so unconsciously, that he found himself entering the suburbs of N——, before he was aware that he had gone over half the space. But now, seeing where he was, he roused himself from his abstraction, and striking on right through the main street, and over a bridge that crossed a river at the other extremity of the town, he continued his way along the high road, until he reached a small public-house by the way-side, into the passage of which he turned, whilst at the same moment, the door of the little parlour on the right was opened by a young girl, who, being seated at the window, had seen him pass.

"Fanny! Fanny!" exclaimed he, as he entered; "what could have induced you to do this?"

"Oh, William!" cried the girl, flinging herself into his arms, "what is to become of me?"

"Why, what's the matter?" cried William.

"Oh," said she. "can't you guess?" and as she spoke, poor Fanny blushed, and threw down her eyes. William guessed but too well.

"Oh, Fanny!" exclaimed he, again, "what is to be done?"

"Oh, what indeed? Oh, what indeed?" cried the young girl, wringing her hands in despair.

"Does your father know it?" asked he.

"No," replied she; "nobody knows it; not even my sister."

"How, then, did you get away? What will your father say to your leaving home?" asked William, in a tone of alarm.

"My father saw I was very ill," replied the girl, "though he little guessed the cause; and he gave me leave to come to my aunt's for a month for change of air. And Heaven knows I am ill, for I never sleep; and though I am obliged to keep up through the day, I cry all night."

"And what do you mean to do?" asked he.

"What could I do but come to you?" replied she. "Who can I look to for help but you?"

"But how can I help you?" asked William.

"I don't know," answered Fanny, in a low, humble voice; and casting down her eyes—"I thought—I thought you would do something for me."

William's heart smote him for the question he had asked. He was indeed bound to do something for her: honour and feeling commanded him to marry her—but, alas! he no longer loved her, and he adored Helen; and the want of control over his inclinations, which formed the great defect of his character, and was the source of his errors, rendered the idea of marrying the one and losing the other utterly insupportable. There was another thing, however, he was bound to do, and which admitted of no delay; and this was to provide a place of refuge and proper attendance for the unfortunate girl during the period that was approaching; so, affecting to misunderstand her allusion, he answered, that he would endeavour to procure a lodging immediately; adding that, if her father did not discover her absence from her aunt's, possibly the whole thing might be managed, and she return home again without having awakened any suspicion of the truth. Fanny sighed at this intimation, but she was too humble and depressed in her own esteem to expostulate. So they went out together; and having found a lodging in an obscure street of the suburbs, the owner of which engaged to recommend a nurse, the young girl established herself in it without delay; and William, with a cold embrace, took his leave, promising to send her some money on the following day, and to come over and see her whenever he could get away from home.

Poor Fanny! had their previous interview left a single hope in blossom, that cold embrace would have blighted it. It was too evident the transient passion she had excited had passed away, and there was no home in his heart for her—scarcely even pity. She was a burden to him, and he meant to shake her off the moment he could; and yet, agonizing as was the alternative of accepting his cold charity, she had no other. There was not a friend in the world to whom she could apply in her emergency. Her brother and aunt were as hard and inflexible as her father, whilst her sister was as helpless and dependent as herself. In the anguish of her heart she looked at the river, which, after leaving the city, could be distinguished from the window of the attic she inhabited, flowing far over the country, through green meadows and smiling pastures, and she longed for the rest those waters of oblivion could bring her. But Fanny was only seventeen, and her young soul shrank from the image of death; besides, though she had erred through love and opportunity, and from the temptations to seek, wherever she could find them, that affection and sympathy which the harshness of her natural connexions denied her, she was yet a pious and God-believing child, and she did not dare rashly to fling away the life that had been given her for she knew not what purpose.

In the mean time, with heavy steps and slow, the young man retraced his weary way. He had anticipated nothing so bad as this in the morning. He had gone unwillingly to meet her, in consequence of a few lines urgently requesting an interview; which interview, he expected, was planned with a view of inducing him to marry her—a scheme he was resolved to defeat. He was now a great deal more in love with Helen than he had ever been with Fanny; and on his union with the former every thing smiled, whilst a union with the latter, even had he liked her, would have been surrounded by difficulties. To be sure, the case might now be altered. Probably, if old Edmunds discovered his daughter's situation, he would insist upon the match. But this did not make it a whit the more agreeable—it was only an additional motive for endeavouring to conceal the misfortune, and get her home again unsuspected. But there was one fearful obstacle in the way of accomplishing this feat successfully, which was, that William had no money. He did not know any thing of his father's circumstances, for it was part of the

old man's system, and not the wisest part of it, to maintain his son in ignorance of his pecuniary affairs, and to keep him with an empty purse. He looked upon money as mischief in the hands of a young man, conscious that it sometimes led to mischief in those of an old one, for at a fair or a race John was very apt to be guilty of a little imprudence. William felt therefore assured, that his father would not give him enough of money to be of the least avail in his present dilemma, unless he were to confide to him the use he intended to make of it. Then, perhaps, he might, if he had it, for John Guinnis was a just man; but the very consequence of this sense of justice would be, that he would immediately inform old Edmunds of what had happened, and propose the only reparation that could be offered for the injury. Then, what if he made a confidant of his mother, and besought her to aid him? It was possible that she would, if she had the means, since she doated on him to excess; but the misfortune was, that she was a very hasty and passionate woman, governed by impulse and not by reason, who, in the first moments of anger, always did exactly the thing, whether right or wrong, which she would not have done had she taken time to consider. Thus he was certain, that in the ebullition of her rage, she would blurt out the whole story to Helen and his father; and who could tell? perhaps even before she had cooled down to the temperature of reflection, actually write to Edmunds himself! "And then I should lose Helen, and be obliged to marry Fanny, and I had rather be buried alive than marry her!" was the vehement expression of his passionate love on the one side, and of his self-will, and we fear almost passionate hate on the other.

It was late when he arrived at home, and his father and mother having retired to bed, he sat down by the fire to think over his plans; or at least to try to form some. Martha, with the thoughtful mother's love, had left some supper on the table for him; but although he had walked thirty miles, and had taken nothing all day, his throbbing temples and his parched tongue made food unwelcome; but he felt he should like to drink — drink — drink — not only till he had quenched his thirst but his memory. He wanted beer—wine—spirits—and there was only water on the table. This irritated him; for a man that is angry with himself is easily made angry with "inferior things;" and he felt himself ill used. Then evil thoughts crept in and gathered themselves about him. He wondered where his father kept his money; and he wished he had the key of the cupboard, where he knew his mother kept her stores, for then at least he could have got some liquor; and so he wavered from wickedness to weakness, and back again. Suddenly a thought struck him. He remembered that his mother had an old-fashioned, heavy silver tea-pot, which she had often threatened to sell; although the regard she entertained for it as an heir-loom had hitherto deterred her. It was an article never used, and that, therefore, would not be easily missed; and if he could only contrive to get possession of it, it might help him to a few pounds for the present emergency; and there was just a possibility of his being able to replace it, before its absence was discovered. But where was it? He looked at the cupboard, but that was a receptacle devoted to tea and sugar, spirits, quince-jam, and other luxuries: it was not likely to be there. Then there was the old bureau, that stood at the end of the parlour. The upper department of it formed a book-case; below that was a desk for writing, with several small drawers; and below that again was a row of shelves enclosed by doors, where it was not unlikely to be. But how was he to procure the key? It was probably hanging on his mother's bunch, and that she invariably carried up stairs with her when she went to bed. After some reflection, he resolved to go to her room, and try if he could find the keys. If his parents were asleep, he might accomplish his object without being discovered; and if they were awake, he could easily invent an excuse for his visit. So he took off his shoes, and creeping up stairs with his candle, gently laid his hand upon the latch of the door. It was the consciousness of his errand that unnerved him: for, apart from that, there was nothing in the simple act of a son's entering the chamber of his parents, even though it were long after midnight, that need have done so.

"William," said Martha, whose anxious ears had been listening for his return; "is that you?"

"Yes, mother," answered he; "would you lend me your keys to get a glass of spirits? I feel rather ill."

"What's the matter, my dear?" said Martha, anxiously, and making a movement to rise; "I'll get up and give you something?"

"Oh, no, no, don't!" answered William;

"it's merely from fasting too long. A glass of spirits will set me quite right, and then I shall be able to eat some supper."

"I hope that's all," said Martha. "The keys are in my pocket here," and drawing the said pocket from under her pillow, she handed him the bunch, bidding him bring them back when he had taken what he wanted; and adding, that he would find an open bottle in the left hand corner of the closet. The young man grasped the keys, and hastened out of the room.

On a shelf in the lower compartment of the bureau, wrapt in a green baize bag, stood the tea-pot. He drew it from its covering; it was heavy, and, he thought, must bring a good deal of money; but as he was dreadfully afraid that his mother's anxiety might bring her down stairs to see how he was, he felt the necessity of despatch, and eagerly looked about for something that he might stuff into the bag to fill it out, so as to disguise the absence of its proper inmate. But there being nothing he could safely appropriate, he hastened to his own room, where he procured some articles suitable to his purpose; and having stuffed out the bag, and replaced it in its former position, he locked the bureau, and ascended again with the keys to his mother; having first taken care to provide himself with the much desired bottle of liquor; and then, somewhat relieved, he sat down by the fire to repose his spirits and take a little refreshment. The grand difficulty that now remained was, how to convey the tea-pot to Fanny, for he had no means of selling it where he was. His only plan seemed to be, to forward it by the coach that passed through the neighbouring village, writing at the same time to advertise her of its approach. So, having in some degree disposed of his embarrassment, he tried to turn his thoughts in a more pleasing direction. He summoned the image of the fair, kind, and gentle Helen, to aid him in banishing poor Fanny from his mind; but Helen seemed to shrink from the rivalry, and to elude his grasp. His imagination could no longer realize the prospects of bliss in which he had so freely indulged, since he had shaken off the visionary chain that, on his first return home, had bound him to Fanny. He had fallen from his own respect, and he asked himself if he could ever offer a hand stained by dishonesty to one so innocent, guileless, and pure. He felt that the rose of their innocent love must droop and fade before the burning conscience and blushing cheeks of guilt. He wished he had not taken the teapot, and he had half a mind to restore it and confess all to his mother; and had it not been for the dread of being forced into a marriage with Fanny, he would have braved the rest, and done so, trusting to Helen's gentle heart to forgive him. But that one fear withheld him; before it his better genius quailed; so, resolving to adhere to his plan, he wrote a few lines to Fanny, saying that he sent her what he hoped would relieve her difficulties, and promising to call and see her whenever he could get as far as N——. The letter he sent by the post, and the parcel by the coach; and having thus, as he hoped, baffled fate, and eluded fortune, he endeavoured to forget Fanny and her troubles, and regain his previous cheerfulness and equanimity.

CHAPTER II.

On the following evening the letter reached Fanny, and in due time the tea-pot arrived at the coach office, where, in compliance with William's directions, she went to receive it.

As the lines announcing its approach had been cold and few, she hoped that the parcel would bring her something more consoling; and, with a palpitating heart and trembling hands, she untied the papers, but no letter appeared. Perhaps there was one inside; and, almost afraid to look, lest this last chance should fail her too, she lifted the lid. There *was* something at the bottom, though it did not look like a letter—she put in her hand and drew it out; it was a folded piece of dirty paper; she opened it and found it was a five pound note: so, between that and the tea-pot, all apprehension of pecuniary distress was for the present removed. But although this was a great relief, for William had not concealed the difficulties he expected to encounter in supplying her necessities, she was yet so grieved and wounded by his coldness, that she could scarcely look upon the contents of the parcel with eyes of thankfulness. She replaced the note where she found it, and having hidden the tea-pot lest the sight of so massive a piece of plate might awaken the curiosity or cupidity of her hostess, she threw herself on her bed, and wept through a great part of the night.

After a few hours of disturbed and uneasy sleep, she awoke in the morning to the recollection that she had no time to lose in making provision for the approaching event;

so, having taken a cup of tea, she set out on her expedition. Not knowing very well how to dispose of the plate, she was at first about to leave it behind and make use of the note; but it occurred to her on reflection, that, as she had nobody near her she could intrust with the tea-pot, she had better sell it herself whilst she was able to move about, and reserve the note, which would be equally available under any circumstances.

The first thing she needed was some baby-linen; and, having selected what she wanted at a shop recommended by her hostess, she blushingly drew the tea-pot from under her shawl, and begged to know what they would give her for it.

"We can't give you any thing," replied the shopwoman; "you must go to the silversmith's if you want to dispose of that. You must have it weighed, and then he'll tell you what it's worth."

"Is there a silversmith near here?" asked Fanny.

"In the next street," replied the woman. "It's the third door on the right, his name is Chapman;" so Fanny quitted the shop to seek the silversmith's, leaving, as Sir Peter Teazle says, "her character behind her," an oversight of which the Baby-linen-warehouse-lady did not fail to take due advantage.

If the deepest humility and most sensitive shyness could have commended forbearance, Fanny might have walked not only through the town of N—— but through all England and Ireland to boot, as secure and unquestioned as did the fair lady with the white cross, immortalized in the song; but, so far from these qualities availing her in the present instance, the more she blushed and looked abashed, the more confident did the above-mentioned lady feel that she was "no better than she should be. Besides, it was quite evident that she did not know what she wanted, and was as unacquainted with the requirements of babies as if she had been a baby herself. There was something very suspicious, too, about the tea-pot; and the chances were, that she was a lady's maid, or something of that sort, and had stolen it from her mistress. However, it would be Mr. Chapman's affair to look after that." And indeed Mr. Chapman was not without his suspicions either. There was certainly nothing very strange in selling an old piece of plate; but Fanny's blushes and downcast eyes, and dread of being seen by any body that might recognise her, were not unnoticed by the old man, who looked at her over his spectacles, whilst he was weighing the silver, with considerable curiosity. She was evidently full of sorrow, and care, and anxiety; and this, combined with her extreme youth, and a countenance which, if not regularly pretty, was extremely interesting, somewhat touched the silversmith's heart, in spite of his suspicions. He made some remarks upon the tea-pot, saying, that doubtless, from its antiquity, those to whom it belonged must have set great value upon it; but Fanny said it had only been given to her the day before, and she knew nothing of those it belonged to. Whereupon Mr. Chapman made up his mind that she was not the thief, but probably the unconscious receiver of stolen goods; and he volunteered some hints, and a little advice as to the necessity of caution, and knowing where things came from. But Fanny, who knew nothing of such matters, and had not the least suspicion that William had come dishonestly by what he sent her, did not comprehend his insinuations; and, having received her money, she bade him good morning, and forthwith returned to the linen warehouse, to discharge her debt and carry away her purchases.

There had, indeed, been no time to lose—three days afterwards poor Fanny was a mother. Sad was her heart, and bitter were the tears she dropt upon the innocent face of her infant, as it lay upon a pillow beside her.

"Dear heart! pretty cretur!" said the nurse, "where be its father? *Surely* he'll be coming to see it soon!"

"Alas! when?" thought Fanny, for there were no more letters nor any tidings of him whatever, and Fanny saw clearly that she was deserted. So she did not even write to tell him of the birth of his child—what cared he? But her grief and anxiety retarded her recovery, and time was pressing for her return home, ere she was well able to move. But she dragged herself from her bed, for there was a matter to settle before she could leave N—— that was very near her heart, and that was, to find some one to take care of her baby. Two or three women had offered their services, and, after visiting them all, she selected the one she thought least objectionable, and agreed with her, for a few shillings a-week, to take charge of the child till she could reclaim it; for Fanny, with her youth and inexperience, had built a little castle in the air about reclaiming it, which was not very likely to be realized. Her father was subject to periodical fits of indis-

position, at which times Fanny's services were in great request and estimation. No one knew so well how to nurse him, or was so handy about his bedside; and, through the softening of his heart towards her on these occasions, she had obtained many little indulgences, that it would have been hopeless to ask for under other circumstances. It was by this means she had accomplished the supposed visit to her aunt; and by the same she hoped, or at least formed a project of attempting—for we can scarcely say *hoped*—to induce her father to give her a little money, and allow her to depart from his doors for ever. To live at home, when once her shame was discovered, she well knew was impossible,—her father would not permit it. His very first movement, indeed, she was aware, would be to turn her out of doors; and, even were he disposed to let her remain, she understood too well the sort of life she might expect, to think of it as a practicable expedient. The only difference, therefore, between the success and failure of her project, consisted in the pecuniary part of the transaction; and this single point she hoped to gain by a dexterous use of her temporary favour, in the course of his next attack. It is true, there was a third alternative, which was keeping the whole thing secret; but, (not to mention that the success of this was very uncertain, her absence from her aunt's during the period of her pretended visit there, being liable to be discovered by a thousand accidents,) her mind recoiled from the deception. Fanny had erred from too much loving, but she was essentially true, honest, and virtuous; and she could not endure the idea of living a constant life of imposture; the difficulty of which would be increased by the unremitting attentions of a young farmer of the neighbourhood, who was her devoted suitor. When to these motives was added the tender feeling of maternity that had sprung up in her heart, it is easy to conceive that all her hopes were centered in the project of spending her life away from home; but without a little money this was impracticable. She thought that she should be able to make a living by her needle, for she had a natural turn for that sort of thing, and was farther initiated into the mysteries of dressmaking than might have been supposed; but it would be impossible for her to establish herself in a respectable lodging without her father's assistance; and to obtain this was now the only aim and hope that supported her.

The tea-pot had brought her so much money, that it had sufficed for all the expenses of her confinement, with enough remaining for her journey home; so that she had her five pounds unbroken to devote to the maintenance of her child. "Pray take care of my baby, and be kind to it," said she to the woman, giving her the note; "that will last you till I can come back, and then you shall have some more if I find him well." Surprised at such a liberal mode of dealing, the nurse spared no assurances; concluding in her secret soul that Fanny must certainly be some great lady in disguise. Unwillingly the young mother tore herself away, and on the following evening she reached home; where it was universally agreed that her journey had done her no good—for that she looked worse than she had done before she went away.

In order that she might not remain in utter ignorance of her child's health, during her absence from him, Fanny had given the woman, who had the charge of it, directions to send her a line occasionally by the post, addressed to "F. E. post office, Weatherby, to be left till called for;" and she had been at home three months, and had already received two or three such despatches, assuring her of her boy's welfare, and inspiring her with an earnest desire to obtain her liberty and fly to him; when, one day, as she was inquiring at the window of the little post-office, if there were a letter for F. E. she remarked a man, who, with his eye fixed upon her, seemed to be attentively listening to what she said. When the post-mistress handed her a letter, he drew so near as to look over her shoulder at the address, which, by a sudden and involuntary movement, she sought to conceal; and, when she turned away and proceeded homeward, she perceived, to her great alarm, that he followed her.

Under any circumstances, a proceeding of this sort would be annoying; but, in poor Fanny's critical position, with her fearful secret on her soul, it was terrific. What his object was she could not imagine; but it was quite clear that he was not acting without design, and that that design, whatever it might be, was connected with her. On she went, through lane and through field, with her letter in her pocket; for, eagerly as she desired to read it, she had not dared to do so with the stranger's eye upon her;—on she went, with her cheeks flushed and her heart beating, and not knowing whether to go straight home, at the risk of the man follow-

ing her thither; or, whether to turn off towards a neighbour's house, for the chance of shaking him off. "But no," thought Fanny; "what would be the use of that? If it is somebody who has found out about William and my baby, and that he is come to tell my father, he will easily find where I live, whether I go home or not; so I may as well meet my fate at first as at last, and go at once."

The house, with a garden round it, stood in a field; and, as she passed through this field, she observed that the stranger turned aside from the path, and addressed some words to a man who was carting turnips. The man lifted up his head, paused in his work, evidently looked after her, and appeared to answer the question. Then there seemed to be further inquiries: the farm servant pointed to the house, and the stranger nodded his head significantly. Fanny's heart sank within her: her knees trembled, her step faltered, her hand shook so much, that she could not turn the handle of the door. The man quitted the labourer, and pursued the path to the house. She tried again to open the door, that she might get in and escape to her bedroom. Suddenly some one, from the inside, turned the handle hastily, and flung it wide; and the shock, combined with her previous agitation, overcoming her wholly, her limbs failed her, and she fell forwards into the passage.

"Fanny! Fanny! what's the matter?" cried her father, for it was he; and, although he was a very austere and arbitrary man, he lifted her with great tenderness from the ground, and carried her into the parlour; for Fanny was his favourite daughter, and his tender nurse in sickness; and he was really fonder of her than he himself was aware of, and much more so than she suspected. She was laid on a sofa, her sister and the maid summoned to attend her; and, as she appeared to be quite insensible, they had recourse to cold water and hartshorn, to restore her.

In the meantime, however, the stranger had reached the house; and, as he was knocking with a large stick he held in his hand against the door, Mr. Edmunds again went out to inquire what he wanted; for it was the having observed him from the window that had brought him so suddenly to the door in the first instance.

"What is your business?" said he to the stranger; "do you want any body here?"

"My business is with that 'ere young 'oman as is just gone in," replied the man. "Be you Master Edmunds?"

"My name is Edmunds," replied the farmer coldly; for, being of a haughty temper, he was not very well pleased at the man's address; "what do you want with my daughter?"

"Why, it's rather an unpleasant sort of a business," replied the man; "and perhaps you'd better let me step in a bit, while we talk it over. May be you've heard of me—my name's Joe Smith—I'm a constable at N——."

"A constable at N——!" exclaimed Mr. Edmunds, looking at him with considerable indignation; "you must be under some mistake; you can have nothing to say to my daughter!"

"Hold a bit," answered the man; "may be she's not to blame; but I am sent here after her, to find out where she got a five pound note that she paid away to a woman in N—— about three months since."

"In N—— three months since!" exclaimed Mr. Edmunds; "my daughter Fanny was never there in her life."

"Then I've been very much misinformed," replied Smith. "Where was she at the time I speak of? was she here?"

"Perhaps she was not here," replied Mr. Edmunds; "but she was certainly not there. I tell you, she was never there in her life."

"You had better let me walk in," returned Smith, who seemed to have no disposition to be uncivil; "mayhap I know more about that than you do: young folks have their secrets, you know, sir; and the old 'uns are not always let into 'em. Now, may I be so bold as to ax if the young 'oman is married?"

"No, she is not married," replied the father, preceding the man into a small room appropriated to his own use; and, beginning to feel somewhat uncomfortable, as the recollection of Fanny's evident depression, wan cheeks, and faded form, presented themselves to his mind. "Why do you ask such a question?"

"Why, because, sir, I hope she is married; for, sure enough, if she isn't, she ought to be."

"What do you mean? Explain yourself!" returned Mr. Edmunds, angrily. "Depend upon it, here's some mistake, and you have come to a wrong house."

"No, sir, no such thing," answered Smith; "that 'ere young 'oman as came into your house just now,—I know it's the same from the description on her that I've got in my pocket-book—besides, didn't I see her get a letter from the post-office this morning, directed to 'F. E. to be left till called for?'

she's got it about her now; that is, if she ha'n't disposed of it since she came in, for she never opened it whilst I had my eye upon her:—I say, sir, that 'ere young 'oman was at N—— last October, a-lodging at one Mrs. Gates's, in Thomas Street, where she had a baby——"

"Stay!" cried Edmunds, suddenly arresting the flow of his discourse, and rushing out of the room, for the confident assertions of the man, together with certain peculiarities in Fanny's late demeanour, which had never struck him before in the same light, were beginning to suggest the possibility that the tale was too true—"I'll fetch my daughter!"

Pale, and just restored to consciousness, Fanny still lay stretched upon the sofa; and as her father hastily entered the room, she lifted her eyes to his face, and read her fate.

"Fanny," said he, sternly, "give me the letter you received just now at the post-office;" and the trembling hand withdrew it from her pocket, and delivered her condemnation to her judge. He glanced his eye over it, and then bade her follow him; but, when she attempted to rise, her knees bent under her, and she would have fallen, had not her sister supported her.

"Fanny can't walk, father," said the latter.

"Yes, I can," feebly whispered Fanny. "Lead me, Lizzy; let me get it over, and die!" And, by the aid of Lizzy and the maid, she was conducted to the next apartment, and placed in a chair. The two girls then left the room.

"Don't be frightened, Miss," said the man, mistaking the cause of her agitation; "maybe you're no ways to blame in the business; and if you're not, there's no cause for fear whatsomever. The law only punishes them as deserves it."

The allusion to *the law* surprised Fanny, and for the first time she raised her eyes to the face of the stranger. It was a rude, good-natured, honest countenance, that she saw clearly bespoke no enmity to her. It could not then be William's father, as she had at first concluded. Who, then, could he be? and what had she to do with the law? These things she thought, but she said nothing, for her father's angry brow was before her.

"The law," continued Joe Smith, "presumes every man to be innocent till he is proved guilty; and far be it from me to suppose a young 'oman like you would have any thing to do with a business like this here, if you could help it. I dare to say, when you gave it to Mrs. Lang, you didn't know what a bad 'un it was?" Here Fanny, who had forgotten all about the note, and was thinking only of her child, again raised her eyes. "It's an accident," continued Smith, "that might happen to any of us!" This was still more inexplicable.

"Speak, girl!" said Edmunds, "where did you get the note? and did you know it was a bad one when you passed it?"

"What note?" inquired Fanny.

"That 'ere five pound note as you gived to Mrs. Lang when you took the baby to her," responded Smith.

"A bad one!" said Fanny, with the blood rushing to her cheeks, only to leave them again paler than before.

"Ay, it was a flash note," replied Smith, "and you must tell me who you got it from."

"I don't recollect," faltered out Fanny.

"That is false," said her father, sternly; "you must know very well where you got it. You had no such thing when you went from here. Who gave it you?"

Fanny was silent, for she was already ashamed of the cowardly subterfuge of *not recollecting*—too well she remembered.

"We've traced it to you," continued Smith; "and if you can't tell where you got it from, the crime 'ill rest with you, and you'll be had up for it."

"And be taken to jail, tried, and transported," added her father, drily.

Fanny buried her face in her handkerchief, and wept, but spoke not.

"Speak!" cried he, striking the table vehemently with his fist. "I command you to speak."

Another burst of tears, and the breast heaved violently; but still no word.

"Haven't you disgraced us enough by your conduct?" said the father. "Will you bring us to more shame? will you let the neighbours see you dragged from the house a prisoner?"

"I cannot—cannot tell," sobbed out Fanny.

"If you don't, I'll leave you to your fate!" cried Edmunds. "I'll not stretch out a finger to save you!"

"She will tell, she will tell, sir," interposed Joe Smith, who was extremely soft-hearted for a constable. "Do, Miss, do tell who you got the note from, and I won't give you no more trouble about the business."

"I can't—I can't!" sobbed Fanny, again.

"I dare say it was from her sweetheart, sir," suggested Joe.

"Fanny!" said the father, "am I to stand here, entreating you to save yourself and me, and your whole family, from infamy, and you refuse to speak?"

"Do, Miss,—do speak!" said Joe.

Fanny shook her head.

"Am I to understand, then," said Mr. Edmunds, "that in order to screen the scoundrel that has seduced you, you intend to accompany this man to the city, and allow yourself to be carried to jail?"

"Oh, let me die! let me die!" cried Fanny, falling on her knees, and clasping her hands in anguish. "Let me die; but I cannot — cannot tell!"

"Die, then!" exclaimed her father, in a passion, rushing out of the room, and bidding the constable do his duty.

When left alone with her, Joe Smith, who was really affected, used every argument he could think of to persuade her to reveal the secret, but without success. Her resolution was immovable; and so continued when she was examined before a magistrate; and the consequence of her inflexibility was, that she was committed to jail to take her trial at the assizes, unless she could be induced, in the interim, to give the information that was required of her.

CHAPTER III.

When William had despatched the letter and tea-pot to Fanny, he did his utmost to banish the whole affair from his mind. As it gave him infinite pain to witness her distress, he resolved not to witness it; and as, when he was in her company, his conscience reproached him bitterly for not treating her with more consideration, and offering her the only reparation in his power, he determined to avoid the inconvenience by keeping out of her way. But, as he found this process of dismissing intrusive thoughts rather arduous, and indeed not always practicable, he had recourse to Helen to help him to fight the battle. Seeing that she loved him, and knowing that she was destined for him, he had loved her with a calm and assured affection, his passion meeting with none of those checks or obstacles which are apt to occasion an overflow. But, from the natural contradiction of human nature — man's nature especially — poor Fanny's humble hopes and melancholy claims, all unacknowledged as they were, gave a spur to the even tenor of the courtship. He discovered that he loved Helen more intensely than he had been aware of; and he found no remedy so entirely specific for the pain of thinking of Fanny, as making love to her rival; whilst Helen, little guessing the cause of the sudden accession of attachment, too gladly lent her aid to the cure. Martha was delighted, and John no less; they really loved Helen as their own child, and her five hundred pounds formed a very important addition to her general merits. To all appearance, never was there a case in which the course of true love seemed less likely to be disturbed by those accidents to which it is proverbially subject; and the most experienced gambler would not have hesitated to stake the odds, not only that the match would come off in due time without let or hinderance, but that the honeymoon would be as sweet and as bright a moon as ever shone upon two young hearts.

In spite, however, of the general success of William's efforts to forget Fanny and her tearful face, yet, as time advanced, he could not help sometimes wondering that she did not write to communicate the issue of her confinement. It must be all over, and she must have returned home; unless, indeed, she were ill, or — and the idea would sometimes obtrude itself — dead. If the former, what would her family think of her absence? surely it would lead to inquiry and search; and then, what discoveries might be made! If the latter, it would certainly be a great care and uneasiness off his mind; but how perplexed her friends would be at her disappearance! However, the people at the lodging house knew nothing of him; and he did not think there was any fear of their being able to trace him, if they tried. Between these two hypotheses his doubts and fears fluctuated, for the possibility of her having resolution to suffer and be silent, his mind could scarcely admit. But time crept on, and there were no tidings of her, and probably never would be any. She had returned home, or she was dead; and in either case it was not likely he would be troubled more on the subject; and so the oblivion, at first so courted and so coy, flooded his memory, and washed out poor Fanny's name and image from its tablets.

As for Helen, she had a fine intellect and an admirable character; but she was in love, and she did not see, or, if she saw, she would not allow herself to acknowledge, the inferiority of her lover to herself in both respects. He was very handsome, with most singularly

dangerous eyes; and his manners, demeanour, and conversation, were much more polished and pleasing, than was commonly the case with young men in his condition. He was fond of women; and, young as he was, instinctively possessed the art of making himself agreeable to them; so that he shone forth the Adonis of the hamlet that was happy enough to call him its own; and there was scarcely a young maid in it, who would not have been glad to change places with Helen Glover.

And now William began to press for what is called *an early day;* he wanted to be married, and his father and mother, after some representations about his youth, yielded to his wishes. Martha first gave way, and then won over John, by iteration of the old proverb on the dangers of delay. So the day was fixed, and great preparations set on foot for celebration and festivity. The wedding was to take place at the village church; and then, in compliance with the wishes of Helen, the young couple were to spend a few days at N——. This latter part of the arrangement was not altogether satisfactory to William. That was a place he would have preferred avoiding—it was connected with disagreeable recollections; and even when he had been over for a day, to purchase a few articles of dress and furniture for the approaching occasion, he had felt very uncomfortable, and had slunk through the streets with the awkward consciousness, that he deserved the contempt and execration of every body he met, for his heartless and unfeeling conduct; and that it was not impossible he might somewhere come into contact with Mrs. Gates, who, for what he knew, might think proper to tell him so. Certainly, this was not very probable; but conscience is an ill calculator of probabilities. He had remained in town till evening, expressly for the purpose of walking through Thomas Street when it was dusk, and taking a look at the house where he had left the unfortunate Fanny. There, under the cloak of night, he stood upon the opposite pavement, and surveyed the walls, and examined the windows of the room she had inhabited; and, if the bricks could have answered him, he might have learnt something of her fate: but he did not dare to approach the door, nor to make any inquiries; and he quitted the city, as ignorant of what had happened to her, as he entered it. However, he had no reasonable excuse to oppose to Helen's wishes, who, having a much loved sister married to a Mr. Davis, and settled there, was bent upon the plan; so he acceded to it, and the sister was advertised of their intentions, and prepared to receive them.

In the meantime, Martha was very busy at home, preparing for the wedding. Store of good things was laid in; the furniture was rubbed, and scrubbed, and polished; all the best things were dragged from their repose to figure in the pageant, and, amongst other treasures, Martha bethought herself of her old family tea-pot. That, too, she resolved should play its part in the representation; and, as it might require a good deal of brushing up, she opened the bureau to take it out; but, great was her astonishment, when she laid her hand on the baize cover, to feel it yield beneath her fingers; and still more was she amazed at its lightness, when she attempted to lift it. It actually dropt from her hand—silently it touched the board—it was clear there was no metal there! Burning with indignation, and with vows of vengeance against the thief, she tore open the bag—but what did she see? an old shirt and waistcoat of her son's; and, as they met her eyes, the truth flashed upon her—*William was the thief.*

The first movement of Martha's mind, upon this most unexpected discovery, was to anger; and her first feeling was of the wrong done to herself, and the imposition that had been practised upon her. To this succeeded a certain degree of dismay that her well-beloved son should have been guilty of such an act; but this sentiment was not so strong or engrossing as it would have been in a more entirely upright mind. Then came the anticipation of what would be his father's feelings on the occasion—his grief, his anger, his indignation: for John Guinnis was a thoroughly conscientious man, and went commonly by the name of *honest John.* And Helen—what would she say and do? Might not such a disclosure put an end to the match? Who could blame her if she refused to fulfil her engagement with a man she could not respect, and in whose principles she could place no confidence? This idea so terrified Martha that it absolutely quelled her passion; and she resolved to keep the secret both from the father and the bride, and only to acquaint William with the discovery she had made; and this she did, reproaching him vehemently with his dishonesty, and the artifice by which he had concealed it. But William was not much in awe of his mother's principles; and all fear of Fanny's affair

being detected having now subsided, he encountered her reproofs with considerable philosophy; turned the thing off with a jest, promising to be a good boy for the future, and never to do any thing so naughty again.

"You know I shall be steady when I am married, mother; besides I shall not be without a shilling in my pocket, as I used to be. If my father had not kept me so short of money, I shouldn't have been obliged to make free with your tea-pot."

"And, pray, what did you want the money for?" inquired Martha; "for I am sure that tea-pot must have brought a great deal."

"It was of considerable use to me, I assure you; and saved me from a great deal of distress."

"Distress!" echoed Martha; "what distress could you be in? I hope, William, you haven't been gaming!"

"Suppose I did bet a little the day I was at the races," answered William, willing to confess to what he had not done, in order to avoid the suspicion of what he had: "you know it's no more than my father did before me. I've often heard you reproach him with his love of betting, mother."

"O, William!" exclaimed Martha, turning suddenly pale as the recollection stole over her, "what did you do with the note?"

"Note! what note?" asked William.

"The note that was in the tea-pot," replied Martha.

"I saw no note — I never opened the tea-pot that I recollect," said William. "What note was in it?"

"A bad five pound note that your father took at the races some time ago," answered Martha. "I ought to have burned it, but I didn't; and, now I think of it, I am sure it was in the tea-pot."

"I never saw it," answered William, "and it is very lucky I did not: for if I had attempted to pass it, which I probably should, I might have been taken up and found myself in jail."

"God be praised you did not find it!" said Martha. "But whoever you sold the tea-pot to must have found it. Who was it?"

"The truth is," replied William, "I did not sell the tea-pot myself. I gave it to a person I owed some money to; and I suppose they sold it — at least, I never heard any more about it."

This fright about the note, together with the self-reproach it occasioned her, and her subsequent satisfaction at finding William had incurred no danger from her criminal neglect, had a magical effect in appeasing Martha's anger. Indeed, she could hardly be very severe with her son, when she felt in her secret heart that her own act, all circumstances taken into consideration, was worse than his: so she recovered her equanimity, patted him on the cheek, and bidding him be a better boy for the future, promised she would say nothing about it to Helen or his father; "and so," thought William, "there ends the affair of the tea-pot!" and shortly afterwards, under circumstances apparently the most propitious, Helen became his wife, and the young couple repaired to the city to spend a week with their relations Mr. and Mrs. Davis.

"If I hadn't been superstitious about putting off weddings," said Mrs. Davis to her visiters, "I should have asked you to put yours off for a week or two, for we could have made you much more comfortable at any other time."

"Why?" inquired Helen.

"Oh, because we've got lodgers in the house," answered Mrs. Davis. "This is assize time, you know; and the place is crowded with strangers, and we've got a couple of lawyers from London in our first floor."

"We didn't know you had lodgers," rejoined William; "for the truth is, I proposed this week because I thought it would be gayer for Helen. She wanted to see a play, and I suppose the actors are here, aren't they?"

"Oh, yes," replied Mrs. Davis, "there are actors, and singers, and all sorts of amusements; and you can go to the court some day, if you like, and hear the trials. Our lodgers have offered to get us into a good place."

"I don't think I should like it," said Helen, "it must be so distressing."

"Oh, nonsense!" said William, "I should like it very much. All trials are not distressing — besides, the more distressing the more interesting, you know. You must go, Helen," said he, kissing his young wife's cheeks, "and Charlotte will get us places."

"Certainly, I'll go if you wish it, dear," answered Helen; "probably it's a mere idea of mine that I shouldn't like it."

"I dare say it arises from the story my mother used to tell you about the gipsy, Helen," said Mrs. Davis.

"Oh, no," returned Helen, "I'd forgotten that."

"What was the story about the gipsy?" inquired William.

"Oh, there was an old woman came to my mother's house once," answered Helen, "and insisted on telling our fortunes; and, when it came to my turn, all she said was, that I was to 'beware and keep out of the Sessions House,' and they always used to laugh at me at home about it, as if she meant that I was to be taken there as a criminal."

"To be sure she did," said Mrs. Davis.

"What else could she mean?" said William.

"I dare say she didn't know what she meant herself," said Helen; and, as this seemed the most probable solution of the mystery, the subject was dropt, and the conversation took another channel.

That night they went to the theatre, with which Helen was so delighted, that they went again and again; and, between this resource for the evenings, and the amusement they derived from the crowded streets and gay shops in the mornings, the week allotted for their holidays was passing so rapidly away, that the visit to the court was nearly forgotten; but William was unwilling to leave the city without seeing this sight too; so he requested Mrs. Davis to remind her lodgers of their promise; and, in compliance with his wishes, the day before that appointed for their return home was fixed upon for the purpose.

CHAPTER IV.

"This way," said Mr. Lister, their legal friend, who had desired them to send in for him when they arrived; "the court is not much filled yet, and I shall be able to give you a capital place."

"Is there any thing interesting coming on to-day?" inquired Mrs. Davis.

"Why, there's nothing very interesting at present," answered the barrister; "but if you are not tired out before, there may very likely be something towards the afternoon. There's a girl to be tried for passing——"

"You're waited for, Mr. Lister," said one of the ushers of the court.

"Oh, I'll come directly," answered the gentleman, and away he hurried, crying to the party he had accommodated, "You'll do very well there; but I'm afraid you'll find it rather dull work for some time."

However, at first, the novelty of the scene supplied amusement enough, though the trials were not very interesting; but, as the day wore on, they did grow a little weary, Helen especially, who repeatedly proposed going away; but William urged the hint they had received that there was something more exciting *in petto*; and as his wife, like his mother, was in the habit of submitting her own wishes to his, he carried the day, and they staid.

It was afternoon before the expected trial came on. "I dare say this is it," said William, "there's a woman in the dock; and, by her figure, she seems young. I wish we could get a glimpse of her face." But as they were opposite the bench, the back of the prisoner was towards them; and she spoke so low, that whether she pleaded guilty or not guilty they could not hear. They asked their neighbours if they had heard better, but they had not; and, the curiosity on the subject amongst the audience being pretty general, there was a murmur of voices raised in the court that for some minutes prevented their hearing any thing that was going on; till, at length, the noise called forth an observation from one of the judges, and a threat that if it continued the court should be cleared. This menace produced silence, and gradually they began to distinguish the words of the prosecuting counsel. "On the same evening," said he, "the man went away and was seen no more. We next find her purchasing baby-linen in a warehouse in Fore Street, where she tried to dispose of a silver tea-pot." As these words reached William's ears, a strange sensation shot through his breast, the air of the place became intolerably oppressive, his hands grew clammy, a mist swam before his eyes, and, for a few minutes, he was incapable of following the discourse of the speaker. But he made an effort to collect himself, and presently the voice and the words again struck upon his senses.

"Shortly after having disposed of the tea-pot," continued the counsel, "her confinement took place; and, by the account of the nurse and the woman of the house, she had plenty of money for all purposes; but the sum she obtained for the tea-pot may account for that. During this period nobody visited her nor inquired for her; and, as soon as she was well enough to move, she quitted the lodging and returned home, having first committed her child to the care of a woman named Lang; and it was to this person she gave the five pound note as payment in advance. For some time the child prospered, but it at length fell ill and died. In the mean time, however, the woman, Lang, had

payed away the note, and it was not long before it fell into the hands of a person who detected it, and traced it up to her without difficulty. This happened exactly at the time the child was lying in the house dead; and the same mail that bore the news to the mother, conveyed the officer in pursuit of her, to the village it was addressed to."

At these words the prisoner's head drooped still lower than it had drooped before; she buried her face in her handkerchief, trying to stifle the expression of the anguish that rent her breast; but, in spite of her efforts, two or three such sobs broke from her bosom as shook every mother's heart in the court, and moved to pity even those most hardened by custom. As for William, he wept so violently, and the heavings of his breast were so convulsive, that Helen became alarmed, and, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Davis, entreated him to go away; and, sensible of his utter inability to control his feelings, he would have done so; but, to penetrate the crowd that the interest of the trial had now assembled, required an effort of which he felt himself so wholly incapable, that he preferred the pain of remaining where he was; added to which, the apprehension of drawing the eyes of others upon him, by any unusual stir, was a very powerful incentive to him to keep quiet.

When next able to listen, he found that Mr. Wynyard was dilating on the singular obstinacy of the prisoner; who, not denying that she knew, still pertinaciously refused to confess from whom she had received the note. Not only representations of the punishment she would incur by her silence, but persuasion, and promises of protection and kindness, had been tried in vain. Doubtless she had got it from the man who had accompanied her to the lodging—her lover or her husband, whichever he might be; but whether when she passed it, she knew it to be bad, was a question that remained for the jury to decide. One thing, he must say, formed a strong presumption against her—and that was the affair of the tea-pot. How that came into her possession did not appear, nor had she accounted for it; but it was difficult to believe that there was not some mystery attached to it. If she had not come by it dishonestly herself, she must have shrewdly guessed that those who gave it her, did. If not, why not avow where she got it? Having expatiated some time longer on this view of the subject, the witnesses were called—the people belonging to the linen warehouse, the silversmith, the midwife, and nurse, and Mrs. Gates, and Mrs. Lang. They could give no information with respect to the subject in question; but the situation of William may be conceived, when Mrs. Gates was called upon to describe the man who had accompanied the prisoner when she took the lodging. "He was a good-looking lad," she said—"quite young—did not seem much above twenty—he had dark hair and dark whiskers—rather pale—he had an anxious, vexed kind of look, but she thought that was occasioned by the young woman's situation—he seemed impatient like—she did not think he was the husband of the prisoner—she was not quite sure whether she should know him again if she met him in the street—she had never seen him but that once—she thought she should know him by a mark on his temple—it was as if he had had a cut there." Helen involuntarily turned her eyes toward her husband; but he was leaning forward with his forehead resting on his arms, which were supported by the back of the seat in front of them, and his face was concealed.

The counsel for the defence dwelt chiefly on the probable motive of her silence. Doubtless, he said, "it was to screen the father of her child from danger—most likely he was her husband—if not, he ought to have been, and at all events his disappearance and apparent desertion of his wife, or his victim, was a strong presumption against him. That he knew the note was a bad one, there could be little doubt, but that he had communicated that knowledge to her was extremely unlikely. As for the tea-pot, as no one complained of the loss of it, there was no reason for supposing it was stolen; and with respect to her silence, although certainly indefensible, as impeding the course of justice, still the evident motive of it, the exalted generosity that had already suffered disgrace, imprisonment, and exposure in a public court, and was ready to suffer still greater penalties, rather than betray the probably unworthy father of her child to his merited fate, was not likely to dwell in the same mind with fraud and dishonesty."

This last argument touched many hearts, and when the jury retired, there was a strong feeling amongst the audience in favour of the prisoner.

This being the last cause to be called that day, there was a general move in the court as soon as it was over; the judges withdrew, the counsellors and clerks gathered up their

papers and shuffled out, all eager to get to their lodgings and prepare for the dinner parties to which they were severally engaged: the strangers also arose; but, owing to the throng, it was some time before those in front could move from their seats.

"William!" said Helen, touching him on the shoulder, for he had for some time been so silent and motionless that she almost fancied his feelings had exhausted him and he had fallen asleep; but when he lifted up his head she could scarcely forbear uttering a cry of alarm; for if an age of sorrow and sickness had passed over that young face, it could scarcely have altered it more,—the drawn features, the livid complexion, the pallid lips, the hollow eyes, the hair matted on the damp brow, all showed that he had passed through an agony inexpressible, a conflict of the soul, pangs worse than death!

"Come, dear William!" said Helen, in a low voice, and giving him her arm as a support. "You are ill, I see—it is the heat that has overcome you;" and placing his hat low upon his brow, and holding his handkerchief to his face, he allowed her to conduct him out.

"Let us avoid the crowd," whispered he as they stept into the street.

"We will," said she; "we'll go by the back way;" and bidding Mr. and Mrs. Davis go forward alone, they turned into a side street that led in an opposite direction.

William crawled on, attracting many eyes from his languid gait and ghastly features, which in spite of the handkerchief that was held to his face and the hat that was drawn over his brows, were very perceptible.

"He's ill," said a woman, as they passed, "look at him."

"Well he may be," answered the person she spoke to, "nobody can be surprised at that."

How the culprit's heart quailed at this observation! It was evident he was recognised; he would be hooted through the streets, and perhaps arrested before he could reach Mrs. Davis's door. He was so faint that his limbs were scarcely able to support him; but Helen, who felt how his arm shook, summoned all the courage of her brave heart, and bore him strongly up. He did not hear the rest of the conversation. "No, indeed," was the answer. "I saw the crowd that came out, and I heard 'em saying, how dreadful hot it was, and how they were squeezed—no wonder the poor young man should be taken faint." But the softest word may be a dagger to a guilty heart.

"I wish we were at home," whispered William.

"We shall soon be there," answered Helen. "We are away from the crowd now; and if you would breathe the air, you would be better." But so imminent appeared to him the danger of meeting Mrs. Gates, or somebody that might recognise him, that he had not courage to uncover his face. At length they reached the house.

"Goodness! how long you have been coming!" cried Mrs. Davis; "and we are waiting dinner for you."

"The heat of the court has so overcome William," answered Helen, "that he has not yet recovered it, and he is going to lie down."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Mrs. Davis; "his dinner will do him a great deal more good. I dare say it is the want of it that is making him ill. I didn't think it so very hot."

"It was that trial that knocked up William," said Mr. Davis; "I saw he couldn't hold up his head, he was so much affected by it."

"It is a dreadful story to be sure!" said Mrs. Davis: "but I am so angry with the girl for not telling! why should she sacrifice herself to spare such a wretch as that? If he had a spark of goodness in him, he'd come forward at once and avow his own guilt."

"Let us go, Kate," said Helen to her sister, who was endeavouring to lead them into the parlour, where the maid was just placing the dinner on the table. "We neither of us can eat; sit down and take your own dinners, and never mind us."

"How very provoking!" exclaimed Mrs. Davis, "and I've got the most beautiful loin of veal you ever saw in your life. I got it on purpose for William as a treat for the last day, because he said he was so fond of it."

"It *is* provoking," answered Helen; "but if you will let us go and lie down for a little while, we shall be better by and by;" and so saying, she led William away.

When William had taken off his coat and thrown himself upon the bed, Helen told him she would leave him to get a little sleep; and, softly closing the door, she retired into her sister's bedroom, where, whilst the dinner lasted, she was pretty sure of not being interrupted. Here she threw herself on her knees, and ventured to relieve her heart by tears. She had penetrated the secret: the mark on the forehead had drawn her attention to her husband, without however raising her sus-

picions—it was a thing that might be common to many. But his subsequent agitation and distress were far beyond any thing that could be attributed to sympathy; and when, for a moment, he uncovered his face, the hue of guilt was too plainly upon it, to admit of the possibility of mistake. What then became her duty to do? she was his wedded wife; and, however great might be the claims of the unhappy prisoner, she could not yield to them. Criminal as he was, her fate was bound up with his for good and for ill; and to lose time in calculating the evil that probably awaited herself, would have been useless, had she been inclined; which indeed she was not; for love, which dies under a series of petty injuries, or the constant exhibition of mean defects, will often survive the shock of a heavy blow, or the sudden disclosure of crime. She fell on her knees, and asked Heaven for counsel. Assuredly, the girl must be justified; the blame must fall where it was due; her husband must avow his guilt; he must submit to disgrace and infamy; he must appear as a criminal at the bar; and would probably pass the rest of his days, or a considerable portion of them, an exile from his country. But would William consent to the avowal? She hoped, from the evident suffering of his conscience, and self-reproach, that he would; and she resolved, the moment she saw him abl to bear it, to spare him the pain of a confession, and broach the subject herself; and as so imperative a duty, as exonerating the innocent, could not be performed too soon, she returned to the room, to see if he were more composed: but, to her surprise, he seemed to be asleep; so she sat quietly down beside him, to await his awakening. But he slept on; and, by and by, her sister knocked at the door, to inquire if they would not go down to tea. Helen, who felt exhausted and weak, and required some refreshment, accepted the invitation; not liking to arouse observation by so unusual a proceeding, as taking her tea up stairs. For a moment, she hung over the bed, and listened to his breathing—it was calm; but his face was hidden by the sheet, and she could not see its expression; so she gently closed the door, and left him.

She was no sooner gone, than William first raised his head, and then, sitting up in bed, he listened to her footsteps as she descended the stairs; then he got out of bed, and going to the door, gently opened it, and stood with it in his hand till he had heard the closing of the parlour door below. Satisfied that he was alone for the present, he next prepared to go out, tying a handkerchief round his throat that hid the lower part of his face; and, with his hat over his brows as before, after again listening for a moment, he softly descended the stairs, stept lightly through the passage, noiselessly lifted the latch of the street door, and found himself in the street. He then took the first turning he came to, lest he should be pursued; and, by a circuitous road, at length reached the prison; where having rang at the bell, and announced himself as the brother of Frances Edmunds, he was admitted to see her.

"I suppose you know she's acquitted," said the jailor, as he conducted him across the court.

"Is she?" said William, eagerly. "Does she know it herself?"

"Oh yes," replied the man; "she might be out by this, if she had liked it, but she said she had no place to go to, and begged leave to stay here till to-morrow; so she's in the matron's room."

"Couldn't I see her alone?" inquired William.

"Oh, yes," replied the man. "Step in here and I'll call her out;" and having introduced the visiter into an empty cell, he left him, and presently afterwards the door opened, and Fanny entered.

"Oh, William!" she cried, clasping her hands when she saw who it was. "I thought it was my brother."

"No, Fanny," replied William, "it's me. Isn't it the least I can do to come and see you when it is I that have brought you here. But perhaps you did not think I had feeling enough to come and see you?"

"I did not suppose you knew I was here," returned she. "But I am acquitted, William."

"So I hear," replied he; "but I didn't know that till the jailor told me of it. If you had not been acquitted I intended to give myself up at once, and say that I sent you the note—though you may believe me or not—but I knew nothing of it. I have since heard that there was such a thing in the tea-pot—my mother told me; but I had taken the tea-pot unknown to her, and I never looked into it."

"I am glad, very glad," sobbed Fanny, putting her hands before her face to stifle her emotion,—"so glad—oh, so glad that you did not know it!"

"I am bad enough," answered William;

"but not so bad as that either. But I can't wonder at your thinking I was. But now, Fanny, time presses—I have not long to stay, for I must see my mother before many hours are over my head. What are you going to do?"

"To stay here to-night," answered Fanny.

"But afterwards? I suppose you'll not think of going home again?"

"Oh, never, never!" answered Fanny, again covering her face with her hands. "I'd rather die than see my father."

"Well, then, Fanny, will you go with me?" asked William. "This country is no home for either you or me, now. I mean to leave it, and I'll take you with me if you will go."

"Oh, thank you, William! Thank you," said Fanny, for she never doubted that she was to go as his wife. "Oh, if my poor baby had but lived, I should have been almost happy now. And you would have loved him so, William; I'm sure you would—he was so pretty!"

"I wish he had," said William, who felt that, in breaking all the ties that were dear to him, and casting himself on the broad waters, he needed something to cling to. "I wish he had; but it's no use wishing that now. I must be gone. You'll leave this to-morrow, I suppose?"

"Yes," answered Fanny, "I was just asking the matron if she could be so good as get me some employment."

"Well, you won't want any now, in this country at least. But what you must do is this. Stay here to-morrow as long as you can—till the afternoon if they'll let you—and then when you get out, go at once to that house where I met you the first day you came to N——. You remember?"

"Oh, yes, the White Horse," answered Fanny.

"There I will meet you to-morrow night," continued he. "You'll stay, at all events, till I come."

"Very well," replied she; "but will they let me,—for I have no money."

William gave her a few shillings; and having renewed his injunctions, he took leave of her; and having quitted the prison, he started immediately on the road to Clayton, which was the name of his father's farm. He might have travelled by the coach; but as he sought solitude and concealment, it suited him better to go on foot, besides that the exercise afforded some relief to the restlessness and agitation of his mind.

In the mean time, Helen having finished her tea, she returned to her room with the intention of asking William if he would take any. She opened the door and put in her head—all was silent, so she stept lightly forward to the bed, but nothing stirred, he must be still asleep. It was evening; the curtains of the bed, as well as those of the window, were drawn; and William had pulled up the coverings when he left the bed, in the hope that if she returned sooner than he expected, she might not perceive his absence. Neither did she; and believing him to be still asleep, it occurred to her that perhaps this was the best time she could choose for executing the project she had formed, of paying a visit to the prisoner. If Fanny were acquitted and left the jail, she might not so easily find her; besides, it was cruel to leave her all night ignorant of the justification that awaited her. Added to this—shall we own it?—there was a little alloy of curiosity, mingled with a great deal of pity; then she too was restless and miserable,—sitting still with her own wretched thoughts was insupportable. To see and converse with the unhappy girl was both doing good and relieving herself. So, now anxious not to disturb the sleeper, she softly drew forth her bonnet and shawl, crept out of the room and down the stairs, and succeeded in getting out of the house, and reaching her destination without interruption, where her appearance immediately obtained her admittance.

Fanny was still sitting where William had left her, with her arms crossed, and her eyes on the ground, pondering on the future. Her fate, after all, seemed likely to turn out better than she had expected. She was to leave the country, and go—God knew whither; but forsaken by her family as she was, that was little—it was even a benefit, for she dreaded nothing so much as seeing either her father or her brother again. Then she was to be William's wife; and although she could not reasonably expect a great deal of comfort in a marriage made under such circumstances, yet it was much not to be absolutely alone in the world, to have somebody to cling to. Besides, in spite of all his worthless and unfeeling conduct, he was still the only love of her young heart—she blamed herself and excused him, arguing that he was justified in the neglect he had shown her; it was no more than men generally did in the like cases—the matron had told her so: they promised marriage, but their object gained, their promises went to the winds, and the

weak believing fool was cast off and forgotten; she had met with no more than her deserts. Then she formed good resolutions for the time to come. She would make him a good wife, and force him to respect her; and she felt how much she might, by her conduct and industry, contribute to his future happiness and prosperity. Yes! however wretched he seemed now, she hoped the time might yet arrive when she should see him happy and contented; and the thought was so cheering, that it brought a smile to poor Fanny's lips, the first that had beamed there for many a day. She had just reached this stage of her reflections, when the door opened, and a lady entered the cell.

It was by this time getting dark, and although each could see the outline of the other's figure, the features were undistinguishable. At the words of the jailor, "Here 's a lady asking for you," Fanny rose from her seat.

"Excuse me!" said Helen, with a trembling voice, for though she had wrought herself up to the interview, now that the crisis had arrived she shook with agitation and scarcely knew how to begin.

"I am come to tell you," said she, after clearing her throat, "that you will be justified. There are those who know you are not to blame about the note — the person who sent it you will come forward and avow it - - and then you will be set free."

"I am free, thank you, ma'am," answered Fanny; "they have acquitted me."

"I am glad of it," replied Helen; "but still you must be cleared of it altogether. It is not just that you should remain under any suspicion."

"I don't mind the suspicion, ma'am," answered Fanny; "the person who sent the note to me did not know it was bad, and I don't wish to bring him into trouble."

"But to say nothing about it would be a great injustice to you, I am afraid," returned Helen, who, however, began to see that if Fanny was already acquitted, and really did not desire any farther justification, there might be no necessity for the dreadful exposure.

"I 'm going away out of the country directly, ma'am," answered Fanny, "and I should be very sorry there was any more stir made about it."

"Out of the country!" repeated Helen, much relieved. "Indeed, and have you any friend to go with?"

"I shall go with my husband, ma'am," answered Fanny.

"Your husband!" said Helen. "Are you married, then?"

"No, ma'am, but I shall be before we set off."

"Really?" said Helen, rather surprised, and feeling somewhat delicate about asking for more information, although, at the same time, her sympathy for Fanny's misfortunes was considerably diminished. "I confess," she added, after a pause, "I fancied your persevering silence must have been the result of strong attachment to the person that sent you the note."

"So it was, ma'am," replied Fanny. "I never loved any body else — and don't now. In spite of the trouble he has brought me into, I love Wil—— that is, him that sent me the note, I mean, better than ——"

"Stop!" answered Helen; "it is not fair that I should sit here listening to your secrets without telling you who I am — I am William's wife. I should not, perhaps, have told you this, as it may give you pain; but, as you are on the point of being married to another person, it is better that I should tell you — it is right you should know that he is married, as the conviction may help to cure you of your unfortunate attachment, which, you know, will be doubly wrong when you have a husband of your own."

"Here 's a candle I 've brought you," said the jailor, entering and placing one on the table. "I thought you 'd be in the dark;" and, as he closed the door, the two young women beheld each other's features. Helen's face — handsome and regular, with blue eyes and light brown hair — was flushed with the excitement and agitation of the scene, and with her hasty walk; Fanny — with less regular features, hazle eyes and dark hair — was pale as marble, and, for some moments, as motionless. Helen's last words had transfixed her; till, suddenly laying her hand on the arm of her visiter, and grasping it as with the gripe of the death agony, she uttered, in a low, but firm and distinct voice, "Are you William Guinnis's wife?"

"I am," answered Helen, whose heart was somewhat hardened towards her [illegible] avowal of love for one man, at the same time that she confessed her intention of marrying another. "We were married last Thursday at Clayton."

"Then what brought you here?" asked Fanny, fiercely.

"I came to assure you that you would be justified, and that William would not allow you to pay the penalty of *his* fault."

"Thank you," answered Fanny, sarcastically; and then, as the expression of her face changed, and the tone of her voice softened, she added, "but why should I be savage with *you*? Who have I to blame but myself?"

"You have no doubt been very much to blame," replied Helen; "but you have also suffered severely for a fault you did not commit; and, if you conduct yourself prudently for the future, you may yet regain the world's esteem, and recover your peace of mind. As you do not desire any farther justification, tell me if there is any thing else I can do for you. I assure you, I shall be very glad to be of service to you, if I can. Have you any money?"

"Plenty, plenty," answered Fanny. "I want nothing whatever, thank you."

"Well, then, if I can do nothing for you, I'll leave you," said Helen, rising.

"Do — do —" said Fanny, abstractedly. "Yes — there is one thing you can do for me, though — one thing — will you do it?"

"Yes, I will, if I can," answered Helen.

"Well, here's a ring that William Guinnis gave me when first he courted me, and I thought *I* was to be what you are now — give it to him, will you?"

"Yes, I will, certainly."

"Tell him, I shall be a bride this night, and sleep in my husband's arms; and bid him, when he lays his head on his pillow, think how I shall rest on mine."

"Good evening!" said Helen, disliking her words, and beginning to think that there was more apology for William's conduct than she had supposed.

"Good evening," said Fanny, drily, "remember my message."

"What strange levity!" thought Helen, as she quitted the room. "That girl must have needed little persuasion to go wrong at any time."

CHAPTER V.

It was near morning when William reached [illegible]; and weary and worn, he laid himself down to rest in a dry ditch, within sight of his father's house. He would have been glad to get a little sleep, and he did fall occasionally into an uneasy slumber; but a certain strange feeling within the breast still started him awake again — not thought — not recollection — it was no motion of the brain that woke him — but a voice from the inner man — from that nervous centre where, according to the German psychologists, dwells the inner life. Who that has known sorrow has not been awakened by it? There, too, must be the home of conscience and the dwelling of remorse — there it drags and gnaws its prey, ever and anon arousing the slumbering brain, that starting into vigilance, asks, "What woke me?" for sleep had steeped it in forgetfulness; and then memory awakens, and the recollection of the sorrow or the crime steals over it — and we *know* that we are wretched.

So slumbered and so woke William, till it was broad morning. What a change had the last twenty-four hours made in his fate. Could this be the same sun that had peeped into his chamber window the morning before, witnessed his peaceful sleep, and shone on the fair face of his lovely and innocent wife as she lay beside him? He recalled the words she said to him when she awoke — how she had thanked God for their good rest, and all the blessings he had bestowed on them; contrasting their happy fate with that of the poor criminals they were going that day to see. And now, who amongst them could be more wretched than he was? and where was her happiness now? Wrecked — wrecked for ever! She had embarked her fortunes in a doomed ship — a vessel freighted with crime — and with it they must sink and perish. Bitter, bitter thought!

Thus he lay for some time, the joyous birds chanting their matins over his head, and the busy insects buzzing their glad welcome to the sun, when by degrees the human world began to stir. The industrious farmer led his team a-field, the ploughman "whistled o'er the lea;" he heard the rattling of the milkmaid's pails, and the echo of her cheery voice summoning her milky charge to fill them; and the tramp of the labourer's heavy foot resounded close on the path above him. By and by the shutters of his father's house were opened, the window of his mother's room was thrown up, and she looked out. — Ah, wretched mother! how much more wretched than you know! The maid came to the door, and looked out, and shook the hearth-rug, and swept the doorstone; and then his father came out, bareheaded, with his gray hair floating in the breeze, and stood some time upon the step, looking up to the sky, scanning the weather and surveying the fields. After this, William knew they would go to breakfast, and that done, that his father would leave the house for some hours. Accordingly, in about

half-an-hour the old man appeared with his hat and stick, and trudged cheerily away upon his morning's business. Then William rose out of the ditch and stole towards the house.

Martha was very busy that day, for she expected the bride and bridegroom home, and she was preparing for their reception. She had been preparing, indeed, all the week, but still she fancied she had a great deal to do. She was so pleased and so proud, in short, that she must still be doing—and calling to the maid to ask if she had dusted out the new chest of drawers, and where she had put the new bed-side carpet, and whether she had stuffed the goose with potatoes, and what was become of the mustard-pot; and then she went to look out of the window in order to congratulate herself on the beautiful day the young couple would have for their journey. But who is that approaching the door? what soiled, dusty, haggard-looking traveller—with the air of William, too, and with William's walk? It's impossible, surely! at this hour! Some accident must have happened—Helen ill—coach overturned—what could it be? To think these things and to rush down stairs to the door was the affair of a moment, "O, William! is that you? What's the matter?"

"Let me come in and I'll tell you."

"Why, you're as white as the tablecloth, and you're all over dust—surely you never thought of coming by the night coach! Where in the world is Helen?"

"Give me a cup of tea, will you—I'm choking with thirst."

"But surely you can tell me in a word what has brought you here in this way—where is Helen? Is she safe?"

"Quite safe—she's at her sister's. Get the tea and make haste, for I have not half-an-hour to stop; and when I have moistened my throat, I'll tell you every thing." So Martha bustled about the tea, which was soon ready; and then she poured him out a cup, which he drank off—and another—and another. "No, thank you—I can't eat—Heaven knows when I shall eat again.—You remember that five pound note you said was in the tea-pot?"

"The five pound note! Oh, yes!"

"Well, I sent the tea-pot to Fanny Edmunds, the day I went over to N——. When I told you I was going to meet some of the Edmundses, it was to meet her. She was with child——"

"By you?"

"Yes, by me—and she got away from home and came to N——, to ask me to help her out of the scrape; so, as I had no money, I sent her the tea-pot."

"Oh, William, why didn't you tell me of the difficulty you were in, and see if I could not have helped you?"

"Never mind why I didn't, now—you know you'd have gone into a passion and told my father, and told Helen, and most likely old Edmunds too, and there'd have been the devil to pay—however, I didn't, that's enough; it's too late to talk of *why*, now. Well, she found the note, and passed it; and yesterday when I, and Helen, and the Davises, went to hear the prisoners tried, what should I see but Fanny Edmunds at the bar, brought up for passing a bad five pound note."

"Oh, mercy! And did she say you had sent it to her?"

"No; she didn't, and she wouldn't, although she had been in prison three months for it."

"And what have they done to her?"

"Nothing: she's acquitted."

"Well; that *is* lucky, to be sure! Then nobody suspects you?"

"Nobody but Helen—Helen knows it. I couldn't conceal it from her; and, in short, I didn't wish to conceal it from her—I couldn't try."

"And what does she say?—how does she take it?"

"She has said nothing yet, and I don't mean to wait till she does. I couldn't, and I wouldn't live with any woman who had such a thing to throw in my teeth—and I never mean to see Helen again;" and although he endeavoured to command his voice and to speak with calm determination, the trembling lip, and the glistening eye betrayed the anguish the resolution cost him.

"But that's madness, William!—that's running in the face of misery, when there's no need for it! You know very well that Helen has too much sense to reproach you with any thing of the sort; and if the girl's acquitted, why need any thing be said about it?"

"I dare say that is your view of the case, but it is not mine; and as my mind is made up, it's no use losing time in talking. What I want you to do for me, is, to give me a little money;—have you any?"

"Perhaps I have; but what are you going to do with it, William?"

"I'm going abroad, if you must know."

"Abroad! where, in the name of Heaven? and to leave Helen behind?"

"Certainly, Helen will live at home, as she did before; or with you, if she likes it better. She's got her money safe—I've never touched a halfpenny of it, nor ever shall," and again the under lip quivered.

"Oh! oh!" cried Martha, wringing her hands; "and is this what it's all come to?"

"Yes, mother," answered William; "this is what folly, and crime, and such sinful conduct always does come to, I suppose; only people don't believe it till they've tried it. But it's no use talking of that now; what I want to know is, if you can give me any money?"

"Money! no to be sure!" exclaimed Martha with violence; "why should I give you money to play the fool with, and make things worse than they are now? Do you think I'll help you to desert your wife, and go out of the country, and ruin yourself? Not I indeed; that you may rely on."

"Very well, mother, then I must go without money," said William, rising and taking up his hat; "only, when I am gone, remember this—it was my own fault that I seduced Fanny Edmunds, and that I took the tea-pot—but when I seduced her, I liked her, and I meant to marry her some time or other; for I had forgotten Helen then—I was a fickle fool, and out of sight out of mind. But I say, remember, mother, that it was your fault that there was a bad note in the tea-pot.—I never could guess *that*, you know; and since we're going to part, it's as well to have it all out: perhaps, if you had been a different mother to me, things might have been different now. I knew in my heart you were wrong, and that my father was right, many a time when you countenanced me in doing things I shouldn't have done. Perhaps, I should never have taken your tea-pot, if I hadn't seen you take money out of his drawer—sometimes when you bade me not tell him of it. There were other things beside: example's never lost upon children, depend on it. However it's no use going on in this way; will you give me some money?"

Silently, with her features rigid and her cheeks as pale as death, Martha turned away, and opening a small corner drawer of the old bureau, where she kept her lamb's wool and worsteds for knitting, she thrust her hand to the back, and drew from underneath every thing else a purse, containing fifteen guineas in gold. Silently she placed it in her son's hand, her eyes the while glaring in his face with an expression that at once terrified and affected him.

"Mother!" he said, arresting the hand that transferred the purse, and grasping it between both his own—"Mother, forgive me! It was cruel—very cruel—but I'm mad and desperate; forgive me before I go!—we shall never meet again."

"My child! my son! my only one! my all upon the earth!" screamed Martha. "My all that I have lived for—worked for—breathed for—My William! my William! my baby, that sat upon my knee, and turned up his innocent face and called me mother—my pride and my glory—my handsome young man! and I've ruined him—undone him—brought him to shame and to misery! You're right, right, right—it is all my doing—all, all, all!"

"Oh mother! mother!" cried William, "don't be too hard upon yourself. I knew very well I was doing wrong, and I shouldn't have done it; but I was weak and foolish, I didn't mean to be wicked — but it's no use making ourselves more miserable than we are by reproaches. Let us part friends. God bless you, mother! take care of Helen—comfort her, and tell her, for all she may think, I love her dearly—but I could never look in her face again. I always knew I was not worthy of her; she was too high—too upright and lofty for such a one as I—no, no, I could never look in her face again. One thing you must promise me; don't let my father follow me; it would be of no use; he could never find me; nobody 'll ever know what is become of me, nor what port I shall embark at. Perhaps, some day I'll write to you; but I don't promise; may be it's better not; it will only renew your grief. And now, mother, good-bye! Hush! hush! you'll be heard. My poor father! give my love to him. God bless you both! God bless you! God bless you!"

The door closed on him,—and the mother fell upon her face to the ground.

About the same hour that this scene passed in the farm-house at Clayton, a well-dressed, respectable-looking young man, with a naturally austere countenance, on which the traces of much immediate annoyance were very legible, descended from the Weatherby coach, at the door of the White Horse — that small inn which, at the period we refer to, stood at the extreme end of the city on that side. When he handed his gratuity to the coachman, he bade him call for him there the next

day, on his return; after which he entered the house, asked for the morning's paper and something to eat; and having sought and found what concerned him in the former, and despatched the latter, he took up his hat and departed; saying that, as he intended returning by the coach on the following day, he would take a bed there. He then proceeded with a rapid pace towards the jail, and, ringing at the gate, inquired for Fanny Edmunds. "Has she left?" inquired he; "and if not, can I see her?"

"You're too late," said the man who had opened the gate, looking at him with some curiosity. "Be you the person that came here to see her last night?"

"No," replied the stranger, "I have not been here before. But is she gone?"

"She's gone," answered the man,—"gone out of the world, poor cretur."

"Dead!" exclaimed the stranger.

"Ay," said the man; "if you're one belonging to her, you may come and see her, if you like."

"She was alive yesterday; she was in the court, wasn't she?" inquired the stranger.

"Ay, she was," answered the man. "But after she was acquitted, there came a young man here last night: he said he was her brother ——"

"Her brother!"

"He said so—but I doubt he told a lie. However, he was some time with her; and before he was well gone, there came a young lady to visit her, and, poor thing, I was glad to see she'd got friends. For the whole blessed time she'd been here afore the trial, not a soul had ever so much as axed if she was alive or dead."

The stranger here clapt his hand to his brow, as if some painful thought had crossed him.

"She was a gentle cretur," said the man, "and as patient as a lamb, though she'd a bold spirit too, for she'd never let on who gave her the note: my mind misgives me it was that 'ere chap as was here last night."

"But how came she to die? What caused her death?" inquired the visiter.

"Herself!" answered the man; "the inquest's going to sit upon the body presently."

"But didn't she know she was acquitted?" inquired the stranger.

"Oh yes, she did," said the man. "She knew it very well; but, somehow, I think this here business has to do with that 'ere young man I spoke of. There was something about him I didn't like, with his chin tied up, and his hat over his eyes; but, to be sure, I thought at the time that it might be pride, that he didn't like to show his face, coming to see his sister in such a place."

"Did she seem in any particular distress then when he left her?" asked the stranger.

"Why, when the matron heard this morning what had happened, it struck her that there was something wild and strange about her. She questioned her very much about what she was going to do when she got out, and if she had any friends that would be kind to her; but she said she didn't want any friends; and she didn't mean to trouble them; and she should provide for herself; and so forth—poor cretur! she meant death, I s'pose, as perwides for all on us."

The stranger then visited the body, and having obtained an interview with the governor, and made very particular inquiries with respect to the air, dress, and appearance of the suspicious visiter of the preceding evening, he departed. His next visit was to the chief magistrate of the city; and after holding conferences with him and other official and influential persons, in which the day was consumed, he again turned his steps towards the White Horse, where he took his tea, and went to bed, desiring to be called at five o'clock.

About two hours afterwards—it was midnight, and the inmates of the little inn had already retired to bed—a knocking was heard upon the door, and a voice called "House!" whereupon, the unwilling host got out of bed, wrapt himself in a great-coat, thrust his feet into his shoes, and descending the stairs, inquired "Who was there?"

"A traveller," answered one from without. "Open the door—I want a bed."

A weary, way-worn traveller, indeed, this disturber of their rest appeared, when having shown him into a parlour the host struck a light and held it to his face.

"I want a glass of beer and a bed," said he.

"We've only one bed in the house," said the host, "and that's in a double-bedded room, and I don't know how far the gentleman that's sleeping there may like your company;" not a very complimentary speech for a host—but there was a strange, wild, reckless look about the stranger, and this, together with the state of his attire, which, though very good, appeared to be in an extraordinary state of neglect, involuntarily suggested the idea of a fugitive from a mad-house.

"He will have no cause to object to me," answered the traveller. "If he doesn't disturb me, I shall not interfere with him. I am too tired to interfere with any one. Pray, is there a young woman here?"

"What young woman?" inquired the host. "There's the maid."

"It's my wife I mean," replied the traveller. "I appointed her to meet me here to-day."

"She's not come, then," answered the host, forming a better opinion of his lodger, and somewhat relieved from his apprehensions.

"That's strange!" answered the traveller. "However, I must go to bed, for I am too tired to keep up any longer." So the landlord lighted him to his room, and left him the candle. "You need not disturb me, unless the young woman I spoke of should come," said he, calling after the host as he descended the stairs. "I am very much in want of rest, and will take my sleep out."

"Hush!" said the landlord, "you'll disturb your fellow-lodger."

The traveller closed the door. The host, who slept below, turned into bed, and was asleep again in a minute; but presently he opened his eyes with a start,—"What's that? Another traveller calling 'House!' Surely there was a voice — a cry? No, all is quiet — it was fancy—a dream of some uneasy sleeper, or his own disturbed brain rehearsing the just acted scene, — it must be;" so he laid his head upon the pillow, and slept till morning.

"It's five o'clock, sir," cried the Boots, knocking at the door of the traveller. A voice seemed to answer from within; and the worthy functionary, satisfied that he had done what he was ordered, went below, and with brush and blacking commenced his day's business.

"Does that 'ere gentleman as is going by the coach want any breakfast afore he goes, Jem?" said the sleepy bar-maid, thrusting her head out of the nook she slept in. "I wish you'd go up and ax him. There's no need for me to get up if he doesn't, you know." So Jem went up stairs, and having knocked at the door, proposed the question. Again there was a sound from within, but as he could not distinguish the words, he took leave to open the door. All was dim — the window curtain was not undrawn — the gentleman could not be up — "He'll never go by this day's coach," thought Jem. Then there was a sound — something strange between a sob and a groan; and as his eyes became gradually accustomed to the imperfect light, he distinguished a figure sitting on the bed nearest the door.

"You'll be too late, sir," said he; "the coach will be up directly."

No answer —— the gentleman must have been taken ill. So Jem stept across the room and undrew the window curtain, that he might see what was the matter. Then he perceived that the figure on the bed-side was strange to him. Jem did not sleep in the house, and had not heard of the late traveller. He would have been strange to any body — indeed, his own mother would not have known him — half undressed, with dishevelled hair and distorted features — his eyes bleared with tears, his face livid, his shirt stained with blood — there sat William Guinnis, a living and breathing impersonation of misery and remorse, whilst ever and anon a sob burst from his labouring breast, that seemed as if it would rend it asunder. On the ground lay the other traveller, dead — murdered, as it seemed; but William declared, and it was believed, that he had done it in self-defence, not knowing, at first, who he was struggling with. Henry Edmunds, Fanny's brother, who was sleeping in the other bed, had been awakened by William's arrival, and recognised his voice; and his morning's inquiries having satisfied him that he was the cause of his sister's destruction, he had attacked him with all the violence of exasperation and revenge.

William Guinnis was tried for the murder, but the jury returned a verdict of *culpable homicide*. For the other offence of which he was suspected — circulating the note — he did not live to be tried. He died in prison, during his previous incarceration, of a broken, and we think we may say, a contrite heart. If suffering and sorrow could expiate his faults, we may hope they were forgiven him.

His young widow spent the rest of her days at Clayton farm; but his unhappy mother did not long survive him; she wept away her life in bitter tears, that she had not wisely corrected his early deviations from honesty and truth, and taught him from the beginning, to love virtue above all things.

THE DEFORMED.

BY M. FRASER TYTLER.

AUTHOR OF "TALES OF GOOD AND GREAT KINGS," "TALES OF THE GREAT AND BRAVE," &c.

CHAPTER I.

I MIGHT, did my vanity lie in that direction, trace my descent through a long line of ancestry; but that not being the case, I will go no farther back in the genealogical tree than to my grandfather, Ewan Macgarrow, whose death, in his hundred and first year, took place but a few days before that on which I was born. He, my grandfather, was the youngest son of the Laird of Auchnavarloch, and at the age of forty, after following his five brethren, and his sorrow-stricken parent, to the grave, succeeded, as he then believed, to a small, but comfortable fortune, as well as to an estate, which had for centuries been in his family. Little, however, save the empty title, was now left, for, slip after slip of land having been exchanged in payment of debt, there remained in possession of the survivor but the few acres of miserable soil that surrounded the dilapidated mansion. Of an easy temper, amounting almost to indifference, the circumstance occasioned my grandfather but little sorrow. He had been at constant variance with his whole family, and, bound to it by no ties of affection, no recollection of a happy boyhood, he parted with the few remaining acres to the highest bidder, rented a small cottage upon the estate, and thus placed himself contentedly down within eyesight of the home of his fathers.

In the course of another year he married; and the lady, who was daughter to the clergyman of the parish, possessed every recommendation, save that of which her husband stood most in need. She was cheerful in prosperity, patient in adversity; she was kind, gentle, and affectionate; but she was penniless.

Years rolled on, and while the small wreck preserved of my grandfather's fortune had been totally dispersed, he found himself surrounded by that never failing attendant on poverty—a numerous family. Want, starvation, and wretchedness, were familiar to them from their cradle; and one by one, as they progressed towards manhood, the scions of the house of Auchnavarloch quitted the paternal roof to work or beg, as prompted by their different dispositions. It would be unavailing, even were it possible, to follow each in their varied degrees of fortune; I will speak, therefore, only of my father. He was quick, persevering, and intelligent, and, by a stern, plodding, and cautious disposition, seemed not unsuited, sooner or later, to reinstate the sinking honours of the family. Such, at least, was the fond expectation of his parent; but misfortune was yet unwearied in her efforts to depress them. Every attempt to raise himself to his former level proved abortive. And at the death of his mother, my father considered himself fortunate in being able to offer an asylum to his remaining parent, in a small cottage where he held the situation of steward, upon the property which should have been his own.

Although in a humbler walk in life than that he had first aspired to, my father now seemed about to prosper in the world. In the course of time he married. His wife, who was the daughter of a rich farmer, brought him some money. Years, unmarked by any extent of misfortune, ensued; and the first break up in the household was occasioned by the death of my grandfather. It was followed by a keener blow,—one that time could not soften, that death alone could bury in oblivion,—it was followed by my birth. My birth! Yes! and the very elements smiled in vain mockery and derision upon the being they were about to behold: for calm, and still, and beautiful, I have been told, was the hour in which I was cast upon the world, an object of disgust and aversion, ay, of loathing, to the very authors of my miserable existence. The first feeling of which I was conscious, was a desire to conceal myself from every passer-by; the next, an indescribable longing for what I hardly knew, for as yet I was scarcely aware that I was an alien from my father's heart, an outcast from a parent's love. That confiding blindness, the innocent delusion of childhood, was of brief duration; and speedily

I awakened to a sense of that misfortune which, instead of exciting the sympathy, had secured for me the horror of mankind, placing me, as it were, beyond the pale of communion with God or man.

But had I in reality, then, been sent upon the earth debased in mind as in body? Oh, no! my bleeding heart within told but too truly how I clung to the species that disowned me, to the kindred that cast me off. My mother,—I could have bowed down to worship her. My father,—I could have placed my neck beneath his foot! My brethren,—I have licked the earth whereon they trode. And, for one recognising look, one acknowledging glance, to own that I was of them, I could have blessed their name, and died. But it could not be; there was an utter annihilation of existence between us,—an impassable desert of darkness; silence and desolation was around me; and, while I thus lay in the depths and the shadow of death, afar far off they seemed to stand upon a track of light, beings of life and gladness.

The curse of Cain was upon my brow, and it sunk deep deep into my miserable heart. At the age of eight years, I had known sorrow, deep unalleviated sorrow. I had no longer the feelings of a child. There was a void in my heart, a blank that was unfilled, for there was none to love me, none on whom I could bestow the overflowing of my affections. Unquestioned and uncared for, hour after hour I wandered in the least frequented parts of the stately woods nearest to the dwelling of my father, till their wide expanse, the beauty of their lordly stems, the lulling music of their streams, stood to me in lieu of that which was denied

> Of objects all inanimate I made
> Idols, and out of wild and lovely flowers,
> And rocks whereby they grew, a paradise.

To me to have been "chid for wandering" would have been a mitigation of suffering, since it would have proved a consciousness of my existence. No blessing was nightly called upon my head, and no lips had taught mine the voice of prayer. 'Tis true that, through the irregular partition, I could discover the forms of my brothers, as one by one, their little hands clasped in supplication, they knelt at a parent's knee; and, by scarcely venturing to breathe, lest a word should escape me, I could hear the sentences they uttered till they were impressed upon my memory. I had heard, too, of the house of God. I had seen, as I passed out to my solitary wanderings, the gayer dress of my brothers regularly laid out on that day; and, from my hiding place, my own family, to the youngest born, surrounded by groups from every direction, hastening forward to the house of worship. But I knew no more. And was I thus to pass through life? Should I never dare to ask a parent to solve the mystery,—to seek the explanation I so thirsted for, from a brother? Was the question, Who is, what is, God? that seemed burned into my brain,—so restless and intense was the agony it occasioned,—to be for ever unanswered?

I will not go back upon the difficulties that attended my first great project. That it was successful, is still a marvel to myself; but to acquire the power of reading was necessary to my happiness—and it was acquired. Week after week, month after month, I struggled on in my unassisted task, supported through every difficulty by the one thought, that then, independent of my fellow-creatures, I should reap knowledge from every page; and the one-engrossing thought, the haunting dream of my life, the question, Who is, what is God? would be answered.

To forward my purpose, I had purloined the discarded spelling-book of one of my more fortunate brothers. The next volume which, in like manner, came into my possession, was entitled, "The Child's First Catechism." I pondered what that word could mean, and if it was likely to promote the search to which all my labours tended. With much difficulty I mastered the first sentence, "Can you tell me, child, who made you?" This, then, was not what I wanted; this would tell me nothing of God. I was disheartened; but continued. "The great God who made heaven and earth!" I burst into tears. The earth, the glorious earth, was the work of God! The wondrous heavens—they, too, had been formed by his hands! Was he capable of this? And should I, neglected, despised, cast forth from the society of my fellow-creatures, should I learn to know, to love, to serve him? There was not at that moment a shade of sorrow discernible in my lot. Every feeling was that of happiness, of gratitude. Yes! I then first knew the meaning of that word—I was grateful. Much that had hitherto been dark, flashed at once upon my new-awakened sense. The bent knee, the clasped hands of my young brothers, was explained. That attitude was not adapted, as I had fancied, to an earthly father:—it was to the "great God who made heaven and earth" that they

addressed their prayers, that they returned thanks for blessings received. Had they, then, been his gift? and if so, might he not also have the power of bestowing them on those perhaps hitherto unremembered. This was at that time the thought of rapture, this the idea that wholly engrossed my mind; and recalling the look, the tone of my brothers when they prayed, I flung myself upon my knees,—but when I would have pronounced the words I had learned from their lips, my heart grew sick and giddy. Were they such as *I* could utter? Could I thank Heaven for the love of parents? could I weary his throne with gratitude for the health and strength bestowed, for the unmerited happiness of my lot? Could I do this? It seemed like very mockery of my own misery.

The knowledge I had so thirsted for was obtained; and from that time, for the space of several years, I struggled in a deeper gloom, a more fearful darkness than before. The very loveliness of nature, the appreciation of which had formerly been the one redeeming point in my character, the one solitary ray, brightening by its influence my otherwise darkened existence, was now robed in tenfold bitterness. The light of the glorious sun was hateful to me. The pale moon, with her placid, peaceful light, poured poison upon my heart; and as I took a fiend-like pleasure in obliterating every trace of God's loveliest creation, the wild flowers that again and again unbidden would spring up around me, words of blasphemy have been wrung from my miserable heart, and I dared to accuse of injustice that hand which, having formed them into beauty, had made me what I was. Years ran on; and of the delicacy and suffering which accompanied my infancy there now remained no trace; save in the proportion to which they had assisted in reducing my form. There was also some f. 'at alleviation in my misery; for, though carefully avoiding all books upon sacred subjects, lest, as in my first attempt, they should tend only to aggravate my sufferings, I had at intervals pursued my studies, and could now, with an ease that astonished myself, peruse any of those volumes to be found in the narrow compass of my father's library. This had, indeed, now become my chief occupation, necessary to me as the air I breathed.

I was thus engaged upon one evening, when a discussion between my father and mother arrested my attention. They had mentioned the expected return of our landlord, and as they spoke of rejoicing and mirth, my blood ran colder in my veins, for I had always looked forward to this event as one to be feared and dreaded. My thoughts were not, however, long allowed to dwell upon this subject, engrossing as it was. I found that another return was looked forward to, another arrival expected, and hearing it I forgot all but the one hope to which, through long years of misery, when all else had deserted me, I had continued to cling. A brother, the eldest of the family, had, since the year previous to my birth, been absent in America, whither he had gone to push his fortune; and he it was who now, on the eve of his return, I learned, for the first time, was hourly expected.

I had, through my half-closed door, frequently heard the letters addressed by him to my father read aloud, and in each my name had been mentioned with that of my other brothers. That mention was enough; and upon that feeble foundation had I raised up an idol in my heart. Yes! one being existed, for whose sake I repressed the sweeping curse, which often in my agony I would, but for him, have poured upon mankind. I had dreamed of him, till dreams became a reality. I had pictured him to my own heart, till it grew familiar with his image. I had listened to his voice,—I had seen him. My dreams were now to be realized. He would be my guide, my protector. Some of my earlier and better feelings came back upon my heart. He would look upon me with pity,—he would allow me to love him. Day and night I had thought of him,—day and night I would serve him I should have something to love, to live for: I should be happy. That night I passed in a state of fevered anxiety; and from the preparations so early set a-foot on the morrow, concluded that upon that day the return of my brother was expected.

I was right in my conjecture; and, unwilling to leave the house, had remained in my lonely room, when the outer door unclosed. A half shout, half laugh, and the "dear father, dearest mother," that followed, thrilled through my heart. It was his voice, the voice I had heard in my dreams; and worlds, had they been mine, would I have given at that moment, to have been among the group as he went on,—"Is this Frank, and this John, and this Harry! what fine fellows you have all grown. But where is George? George!" he called aloud, laugh-

ing again in the very gladness of his heart. I could not resist that call, — I could not hesitate. I had purposed that our meeting should take place without observers to blast the ecstasy of that moment,—to blight, with withering looks, that pity and tenderness, on the hope of which my life hung; but now, when all doubt had vanished, when certainty of his love alone existed, forgetful of, or indifferent to their presence, I rushed towards him, when, starting from me so as to avoid my touch, he gazed at me for a single moment, with — oh, such a look of horror! and then, clasping his hands upon his forehead, he uttered, "Great God!"

I heard no more, saw nothing further. The sudden revulsion of feeling had overpowered me. I became insensible; and, for days after, raved in all the wildness of fevered delirium.

I woke at length, — woke to a perfect frenzy of loathing of mankind, of all the world, animate and inanimate. I was in a delirium of agony, as I had been of fever. I woke at length, and it was in very recklessness of what might still be in store for me, that on the first days of my recovery I fled to the woods. "The lord of all these is returned," I exclaimed. "I shall soon be thrust forth, lest the eye of his lordly heir, or his haughty bride, should, in their rambling, chance to rest upon any thing so loathsome as I am."

CHAPTER II.

Such as I have described them, were the first years of my life; and shortly after the period to which I last alluded, it was that a new state of existence was opened to me. In the recklessness of despair I had, I have said, resumed my former way of life, and even after becoming aware of the return of the family, spent my entire time in the woods of Glenullen.

As time passed on, my mind grew more tranquil, for the security of being undisturbed was gradually restored; and it was not for some months after the return of Lord and Lady Lindsay, that I, one evening while keeping my solitary watch in a dark, lonely cell, — the sombre light and complete seclusion of which, had rendered it my constant resort, — was startled by that sound, (the sound of the human voice,) which above all others filled me with dread. With a foreboding of evil, I glanced fearfully out, and certain that the advancing party could be none other than the dreaded inmates of the Castle, I felt that my fate was sealed.

The speakers were still distant, and I might have fled; but, paralyzed by horror, my whole frame grew rigid as iron, and the gaze of the basilisk is not more fixed than was mine, though I drank in torture at every glance, and writhed in agony over that scene which rises now on my recollection, in so calm, and pure, and beautiful a light.

The party, by whose approach I had been thus spell-bound, had halted by the side of a small trout stream, not many yards from the spot on which I lay. It consisted of a lady, and a little boy and girl; and, had I not been blinded by the dread which so long had haunted me, I might perhaps even then have felt, that in the appearance of these three beings there was little to warrant the dread and dismay with which my fevered fancy had oppressed me.

From the young heir of Lindsay, rich in his dower of boyish strength and beauty, I might indeed have turned with that sickening sense of envy, which ever assailed me most when I looked upon beings of my own sex and age. But there also was the lady of Glenullen, with her gentle movements, her low voice, her look of maternal pride; and gazing alternately on either face, another,— a more fair and fairy-like being eye never rested upon,— it was the little Lucy Lindsay of the Castle, who, sole rival of her brother in the heart of their parents, was looked upon by each member of her family with an almost equal degree of protecting fondness; for while he, the young Evan Lindsay, was in his tenth year, she but smiled and prattled through the fifth summer of her baby life. She was still busily engaged in decorating, with faded wild flowers, the prostrate fishing-rod of her brother, when the lady, summoning her to her side, kissed the brow of her son, and reiterating, as it seemed to me, injunctions of carefulness and of a speedy return, left him to pursue his sport.

The boy stood for a moment looking after them, the parting smile still curling his beautiful lip; then "Good-by, Lucy," he shouted. And liberating the hand of her mother, she bounded back to where he stood, and extending her little arms, clasped them laughingly round his neck; then, half amused, half fearful of being thus lifted from the ground, she clung the closer to him, till, encircling her with his arm, he gave at once the support and embrace she had looked for.

I watched that scene, the kiss at intervals

pressed upon her lips to stay the burst of merry laughter, the unclasping of the small rounded arm, the placing her again upon the ground, the smiling return to a smiling parent,—I watched it all, and sinking with my face upon the ground, tears coursed each other, at first slowly down my cheeks, till feelings of regret, envy, and utter desolation, crowding on my mind, I gradually gave way to one of those paroxysms of agony, then so frequent in their recurrence.

To my distorted imagination, that scene of happiness seemed to have been acted before me only to increase the consciousness of my misery.

I have said my face rested on the ground: buried as I was among the long grass, and occupied by my own feelings, I had not observed an approaching step; and the first information I had, therefore, of being in the presence of another, was the not ungentle grasp of a hand upon my own. I darted from my recumbent posture, and, with a wild yell of abhorrence, would have fled from the spot; but, blinded by agony, my foot striking upon the root of a tree, I was hurled headlong to the ground.

The grasp was again renewed, but this time with even more of gentleness than before. A hand, too, I thought was lightly pressed upon my forehead, and the whole air around seemed to me suddenly impregnated with music; for a voice uttered words, few in number, but so full of pity, commiseration, and gentleness, that, but in my turn I feared to alarm the speaker, I should again have started from the ground, not to fly, but to prostrate myself before what I concluded must be a visitant from another world—I had indulged in such dreams—and sue to be spoken to again, but once again, in that tone of almost interest. My eyes unclosed, and I shrunk again into myself, for they had rested on the heir of Glenullen, on the young Evan Lindsay of the Castle. He spoke again, and it was the same heart-reaching voice,—"You are hurt," he said; "and I fear it was I who frightened you; but you were crying so much. Poor boy! what can make you so very unhappy?"

Years have intervened since then, yet vivid as ever is the recollection of the intensity of feeling with which these words overpowered me. Great Heaven! was there indeed upon earth one being who could so speak to me?

It were long to tell how, from that hour, the young but noble mind of that gracious creature was bent upon relieving my misery. It were long to tell by what slow degrees he won me to him; how, again and again, with unwearying care, he patiently pursued the same path, even when my thankless and ungrateful heart cased itself in the armour of distrust and hatred, conscious, as it were, that all its hardened animosity must be called into array, to resist the pleading look, the earnest tone, the magical words of that young child, who was, through God's mercy, destined to be the means of rescuing me from myself, and from the bitter misery with which I was environed.

Never shall I forget the first hour in which, roused by his entreaty, to cast my burden upon God, to lay me down humbly and meekly at his footstool, I poured forth a confession of my utter ignorance, and, kindling under his look of pity, reviled myself, mankind, ay, and the very God of whom he had spoken with bowed head, and in whispered words.

The look of horror, the sudden recoiling from my side, the withdrawal of the hand which had been laid in the earnestness of entreaty upon mine, all struck a cold terrifying chill to my heart; but it was only for a moment, for a sudden light seemed then struck in upon my brain, revealing, in deeper shades, the darkness that had reigned there. And, though I knew not who or what I had blasphemed, I felt that I had spoken blasphemy. I knew not what holiness I had profaned; but I felt that I had trampled upon a holy thing. The soul of that child, fresh from God, and still a temple for the Spirit of God, had thrown a portion of its divinity around me; and, without words, had, by the shrinking horror that oppressed him, revealed not only the daring sinfulness of my own nature, but the surpassing purity of that I had reviled.

Yes, I had indeed shed horror upon that young mind, for I had given it its first dread insight into a soul that knew not God; into a being striving with its maker; and, for a moment, he had recoiled from the dreadful spectacle, outraged and dismayed.

I saw, I felt what I had done; and bowing down before him in a sense of shame, bewilderment, and terror, that there are no words to picture, "Pity me, pity me," I exclaimed; "I feel that you are good; I know that there is goodness somewhere, but where? I cannot grasp it. I do not know what is good, or who, or what is God. Oh, tell me, for I am miserable. I am perishing in dark-

ness, lost, lost for ever!" And, my whole soul dissolving within me, I wept that first gracious flood of repentant tears which God had, in mercy, sent to wear away the stone of a time-wearied heart, and to bring me, a sorrowing and yet rejoicing sinner, to the footstool of that cross, where tears, not of water but of blood, had been poured out abundantly for me.

Those tears, that had spoken the softening of my own heart, had overcome at once the gentleness of the child; for, throwing himself upon the grass beside me, and looking up in my face with the most touching sweetness of expression, "Do not, do not cry so," he said; "and oh, put away that fearful, that miserable look! God will show you goodness,—we will all show you goodness."

"Oh my poor poor boy," he exclaimed, tears of the most earnest pity filling his beautiful eyes as he spoke, "where have you lived—what have you been, to speak in this dreadful way, to say that you do not know God. God is our Father, our Father in Heaven. He keeps us, he cares for us! Without him we could not live, no, not for a single moment. He made heaven and earth, every thing that is beautiful, every thing that is delightful. He made you and me, that we might live happily as his children in this beautiful world below; and that he may make us a thousand times happier, as his children, in the glorious world above."

"Mamma reads to us, from His own book, beautiful things of that beautiful world; but none that I love better than,—'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him;'" and, kindling into the solemnity, the beauty of holiness, he stood wrapt and inspired before me.

I was awestruck, and gazed, as if in a dream, on the incomprehensible vision. An unseen power was around, a glorious consciousness opening upon me, a new life expanding within; for I had heard things that were unearthly, words that seemed sounding from another sphere! God, the Creator, the maker of all things, he was then our Father—we his children. There was another home for us than this. A home of rest for the weary, of love for the unloved. A home for me, even for me—outcast, hated, forsaken.

Oh the gush of indescribable, incomprehensible emotion, that then opened its lifetides upon my soul. Truly, it was the death of the old man, the birth of the new, in my heart. Wonder, adoration, gratitude, and love, instincts that had lain dead or dormant within me, now burst into life, becoming at once the law and the religion of my being. What was my present despised and miserable state—my soul no longer dwelt in darkness; it had seen, it had caught the light of life! God was my spirit's father. I felt myself His child! What was a world's wonder, a world's contempt,—death would shelter me from all, and I should be with God!

The stars in their silent courses, the sun in his burning track, the sea in its restless motion, the winds in their soft whispers, or in the mighty roar of their angry voices, had not all of these long spoken to my soul of mysterious agencies to be worshipped—of might and majesty that swayed the universe. But now that which a blind, a dim instinct had dictated, became to me a glorious revelation from on high. The creature acknowledged the Creator; and "the spirit" in its allegiance "returned to the God who gave it."

I scarcely know in what words to describe the increase of peace and joy, that now with each new day flowed in, in broader and yet broader waves, upon my regenerated soul. And the mighty means employed, to work the unlooked-for revolution, what were they? The pleading look, the earnest words, of a young child. Truly, "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength."

Day after day, that rare creature, appointed to be the human saviour of my soul, wearied not to seek my side. To my own kindred, my own blood, I was an object of aversion. To every casual passer-by, one of dread, even of terror. But he, cradled in the lap of luxury, nursed among objects of softness and beauty,—he who might too naturally have shrunk in horror, or stood aghast at the wretched spectacle before him,—he it was who, armed with a holy pity, flew like a ministering angel to my side; and shedding upon my heart the first sweet drops of human sympathy it had ever known, restored me to my lost place among created things, by pouring into my soul a knowledge of its Creator.

Day by day, led by the divine gentleness and pity that animated him,—for what but a divine impulse could have brought a creature so buoyant with youth and happiness to seek out the companionship of such as I?—day by day, I have said, he wearied not to seek my side; and then came the crowning

of my earthly happiness, for *he grew to love me*; and with *his* love a passion sprung up in my soul, so intense, so overpowering in its nature, that, but for the God he had taught me to worship, it had been idolatry.

Well might I sit, and look, and long for the appointed hour that daily brought him to the rocky nook we had selected for the place of meeting; well might I watch with an intensity that amounted to pain, the first sound of his coming step; for with him seemed to come all that was bright and beautiful in nature. If my heart drooped,—for in spite of the glorious life that had lighted up within me, an overwhelming sense of my long darkness and rebellion would at times bear me to the ground,—in the full tide of his warm pity, he was there to comfort me with his rejoicing presence, and uphold me with the child-like brightness of his faith. If, overpowered by a sense of earth's desertion, I wept the bitter irrepressible tears of a soul smitten within me, of a heart that was withered like the grass, in the gushing tenderness of his ardent nature he would come to pour out his grief with mine, and to prove, by every bright and precious tear that mingled with my own, that I was not alone; that even in this world there was one to love me, one whom I might dare to love.

How strangely, how darkly must those revelations that in our hours of companionship I have poured into his heart, have sounded in the ears of that innocent child. And yet, ignorant as his young life was of sorrow and suffering, there were depths in that heart which responded to every feeling of my own, and to my most agonizing expressions gave back the throb of sympathy.

Then, too, how he would while away the hours, with the glad and careless prattle of all his thoughts, occupations, and amusements; and how he would look forward to those hours (for in the joyousness of his heart all things seemed possible) when I was to share with him in all.

"If you have none to love you," he would say; "if your father and mother care not for you; if your brothers shun you, because you are unable to join in their sports; if you are unhappy at home, why not come with me, live with me? I shall make you so happy! papa and mamma are so good, so very good."

Once only it was that he alluded to this subject; for the burst of agony that followed the proposal, the harsh refusal, the almost frantic entreaty that he would never again hint at what must ever be so repugnant to my feelings, sealed the lips of the gentle boy: he wept to have made me weep, and the subject was never again alluded to between us.

"George," said he one evening, approaching upon tiptoe, "George, I have brought Lucy with me; I have left her hiding in the thicket close by. Do but let me bring her this one night: I will never trouble you any more, but just this once."

She came; and never again did I tremble at her approach. There was such a clinging fondness in her voice and manner as she spoke to, or looked upon her brother; there was such timid kindness, such, child as she was, such anxiety to conceal, as she turned to me, the pity she could not but feel, and which while it soothed, half pained me. But it wore away, and shortly her little hand was extended to meet mine, as readily as was that of her brother. She came with smiles; she parted with the promise of return, and I was happy. Poor, dependent, wretched as I was, I had no means of proving the gratitude I felt towards the young Evan Lindsay. He whose beauty and gracefulness won every heart, whose very will was law to those around him, how could I, save in words only, hope to express the feelings that overpowered me. But with Lucy it was different. I could seek the remotest parts of the wood for her favourite flowers; I could gather the first wild strawberries from their grassy bed; I could tame the young roe, to answer to her call; or I could rescue the unfledged and screaming inhabitants of some tiny nest from a truant school-boy, imboldened by the certainty of thus gratifying a heart at once so child-like and benevolent.

I could linger long, and dwell for ever upon every minute incident that occurred, during the four succeeding years, for they were among the most blissful of my existence.

I had formed a realm of my own, a world inhabited by two beings alone. Innocence, holiness, meekness, love, beauty, belonged to my world. Hardness of heart, selfishness, unkindly feeling, found no resting-place there.

How strange a situation! and how mysterious are the workings of Providence. I was an outcast, exiled from my fellow-creatures; and yet, reposing securely on the confiding disinterested love of two such beings as Evan and Lucy Lindsay, I had been left to live and die in ignorance worse than death! in

ignorance of my God, of my redemption; in ignorance of that cross, where the blood of the Lamb had been poured out for me.

For me! Ay, there is the exulting thought, there the hope, that, lifting up my soul from the surrounding billows, has enabled me to ride calmly upon the waters, a thing of beauty and of glory in itself, though linked for a while to that miserable body, whose meetest destiny is food for worms; and which, disfigured and defaced as *He* saw fit to make it, will yet resolve itself as well into the dust of death, as the fairest or noblest form that ever enriched humanity.

It was one morning towards the close of the fourth summer, when I had been looking out for the coming of those steps that ever brought gladness to my heart, that I was startled by the sudden appearance of Lucy Lindsay alone, and so pale, so terror-stricken in her aspect, that my heart died within me.

"Speak to me, for the love of Heaven," I exclaimed. "Your brother, — oh, in pity speak to me, tell me——"

"Evan is ill," she murmured: "he sent me to you: he is hurt;" then clasping her small hands, and with a burst of agonizing tears, — "Oh, so much hurt; he will die, George, he will die."

I know not how those who have many loved objects to cling to in this world, may listen to such an announcement. On me it struck like the thunderbolt of God's avenging wrath, and sense and reason seemed failing beneath the blow.

I have no further recollection of what passed; perhaps I tried to speak the comfort I could not feel to the weeping child, as she stood wringing her hands and looking up in my face with that expression of agony with which her blanched lips had uttered, "He will die, George, he will die." Or perhaps I heeded her not, wrapt in my own grief, and forgetful that she, with all the unselfish beauty of her nature, had left the side of her perhaps dying brother to seek me out, to make me a partaker in their grief. It may be that I darted from her side. I cannot say; but through wood and field I must have hurried on, every feeling so lost in the one overwhelming dread, that even when I entered the Castle, and sped along deserted corridors, and long endless passages, no thought of my strange intrusion occurred, until suddenly, as if awakening from a dream, I felt that I stood in the presence of Lord Lindsay.

For one moment only I remained transfixed to the spot. The next, flinging myself at his feet, "Pardon me, pardon me!" I exclaimed, in a voice, hoarse from suppressed agony. "Only tell me that he lives, and I will go, never to return. I will never see him more; oh, never, never!"

He was still silent, his face was deadly pale, and as he made a faint effort to raise me, I clung with more frantic eagerness to his knees. "Do not cast me off. Bear with me one moment — only one moment. Answer me! tell me! does he live? — Oh, for the sake of Heaven, for his sake, for the sake of your boy, in pity, in mercy, tell me!" The strong frame of Lord Lindsay trembled in my grasp; he bent towards me, and in a whisper that, faint as it was, thrilled through my heart's core, "He lives," he said; "rise, my poor boy, rise, I will tell you all." He led me into another room, and seating me by his side, laid his hand kindly upon mine. I was alone with him. Alone, and by the side of that dreaded being; but I felt no terror. Self seemed annihilated within me; and, while my eye was fixed steadfastly upon his, he went on, "I know your history, I have long learned it from him, from Evan; but compose yourself, my poor boy. All may yet be well; the injury"— and at the word a shudder ran through the frame of the father — "the injury may not be so great, so fatal, as we have supposed. With God's mercy, he may yet be restored to us."

"It was by his desire," he continued, "that Lucy went in search of you. From her you know, I conclude, that, riding with me this morning, his horse reared, — it fell back with him; and, from the long insensibility that followed, we fear the head has been injured. We have sent for the best medical advice, but till that arrives, must, with God's help, endure the suspense."

Lord Lindsay had hurried one sentence after another with a nervous anxiety to complete the task he had undertaken. Then, turning a look full of pity upon the miserable being by his side, and struck with the intensity of suffering with which I drank in the words he uttered, "Poor boy," he said, "you suffer with us: God bless you — God comfort you; remain where you are for the present. I will see you again—or will send —but must leave you now;" and, rising from my side, and wringing my hand in his, "Pray for him," he said, his voice choked with emotion.

When left alone, alone with my own miserable thoughts, the last words of Lord Lindsay seemed still in every hideous sound and tone ringing round me their ominous foreboding of evil. Pray for her! for him, for myself. Yes, what else was left me, but to pray? What was left, but to fling myself before the God of mercy, as I did, pouring out my soul's anguish at His footstool, till exhausted at length, I lay curled up like a withered leaf, a blasted thing, a hideous speck, among the rich cushions of the carved and damasked sofa, on which I had sunk.

The change of scene, the luxuriance of comfort, the gilded mirrors, the stately shelves, so richly stored that even their massy proportions seemed bending under the weight of volumes they contained, these all were there, but I saw them not. Hour after hour passed on, and there I lay, still, motionless, without thought. Mind and body seemed alike petrified into stone.

Evening was now rapidly approaching, the lengthening shadows were throwing a sombre light over the objects without, and darker still they fell through the deep embrasured windows and stained glass of that stately room.

There was always, even in my happiest hours, something in twilight more consonant with my feelings than the bright light of the glorious sun, and now it seemed infusing a holy balm upon my worn spirit. So much of consciousness had returned, that I raised my head and looked forth; but with the effort, the tide of suffering seemed ebbing back upon my miserable heart, and I was yielding to another burst of irrepressible agony, when I was startled by a quick, light, hurried step. It seemed to me passing swiftly through the corridor, by which I had entered the library, and I started to my feet, but giddy, weak, enfeebled, by those hours of suffering, sunk again upon the sofa.

The door unclosed, and the faint light shone upon the slight, childish figure of Lucy Lindsay. She stopped for a moment, looked hurriedly, almost wildly round the room, then, "George," she exclaimed, and, bounding forwards, she clasped my hand in hers, essayed to speak, but, gasping for breath, sank upon her knees, and bursting into tears, sobbed aloud. Yes, sob followed sob, rising from the young heart that seemed suffocating under its excess of feeling, whilst tears seemed literally to gush over the fair smooth cheek. But how different were these tears, how different the whole look and air of the weeping child from what it had been, when, with that agonized expression, (so doubly fearful on the small, beautiful features of childhood,) with which she had uttered, "He will die, George, he will die."

She had not spoken, but I felt, I knew that there was hope. Without a word uttered, without even light sufficient to read the glance of rekindling happiness in those meek eyes, the feelings of her soul were borne in upon mine.

"Yes!" she exclaimed, at length finding utterance; "yes, George, God *has* had mercy; he will live, he will live! Oh, my Evan, he will be well again, quite well. How dark the world would have been without him, had you thought of *that*, George? what would mamma have done without him? what should *I* have done? what could you have done, poor George?" and with a quick motion she sprang from her knees, raised her small graceful arms, twined them round my neck, and laid that soft beautiful cheek, still wet with tears, trustingly, confidingly upon mine.

How often, in my first years of suffering, I had longed, yearned for a sister; and how often, in later years of increasing agony, I had thanked God that this pang had been spared me. She could not have loved, could not have felt for me. I should have seen her, too, shrink from me with disgust. It would but have added misery to misery. And now, great God, the gentle being by my side, the radiant child, all angel-like in her surpassing loveliness as she looked at that moment, she had twined her arms round the miserable boy,—she had laid her cheek lovingly on mine,—she poured words of innocent comfort on my ear; and, for a moment yielding to the overpowering impulse, with a feeling of unutterable love, adoration, and worship, I clasped her in my arms; then, seizing the small baby hands in mine, pressed them convulsively to my lips.

"You are like me, dear George," she said, smilingly,—"you cry because you are happy. How strange to cry because I am happy!" and again there gushed forth a flood of tears. "But rise," she added,—"rise, dear George;" for I was still cowering upon my knees by her side. "Do, rise. Sit down beside me here, and let me tell you every thing. Do you know that it was all a mistake, a dreadful mistake?" she repeated, shuddering. "He is not so very, very much hurt. Papa sent for a wise old man,—oh, such a dear, good, kind, wise old man!—

and he was long of coming, very, very long; but he did come at last; and he went to see Evan, and took all the bandages off his poor head. And I crept in, and staid so quiet in a corner; and poor mamma was standing there, looking so pale; and papa and nurse were there; and Mr. Morton was at the door, and so was Madame Dumas, — it was she let me creep in, she knew I would be so quiet. And poor old Gray was there, too,— poor old man, he cried more than any of us; and we all stood still, and then the Doctor looked up at papa and smiled, — oh, that beautiful smile, dear, dear old man! — and he spoke quite out loud, and said, 'Pray, my Lord, what has frightened you all so sadly? There is nothing here, I do assure you, there is nothing here but a pretty severe cut. I see worse ten times a-day, and no one to look so pale about it as you were all doing now.' Then he shook hands with mamma, — the dear, kind old man, — and looked so happy, so glad, to know that Evan would not die; and then he saw me peeping from behind the curtain, and called me little pale face, and said I had more need of a doctor than Evan had; for that if we cut off some of his beautiful curls, and kept him quiet, quite quiet, only for a week, that he would soon be well again. Oh, what happy, happy words! And when I saw that papa and mamma really believed them, and did not look so pale any longer, then I remembered you; and I ran away, for I thought how unkind it was to have left you alone all the long, long day, for papa had told me you were here. But I could think of nothing — oh, of nothing in all the wide world—but Evan, I was so afraid he would die. What should we have done, George,— what do you think we should have done, if Evan had died?"

How deep, how fervent was the feeling with which I had listened to her words! With what an overpowering sense of gratitude, when she had left me to revisit her brother, did I sink upon my knees and pour out praise to the Giver of all mercies. But I was not now left long to my own feelings, for, once more bounding into the room, Lucy Lindsay was by my side.

"Poor Evan wanted so much to see you," she said. "But he must not, not to-night: it would not be good for him, they say. And so then he sent me to you to say — what do you think, George, it was to say? I know you will grant it. You would not have the heart to refuse him now, would you? It was to say, that if you love him the least little bit in the world, you will stay here to-night, and not go back to your own home any more, but stay here and live with us. "Will you, dear George?" laying her hand persuasively upon mine. "May not I go back to tell Evan you will stay? He will sleep so well if I may, for his heart is so bent upon it, that papa says it will make him get better if you will only say, yes. Papa was coming here himself to ask you if you would; but Evan thought you would rather not see him to-night, though he is so kind, —oh, you do not know how very kind! So then he sent me, because we are old friends, you know; so do let me say you will stay, at least to-night."

"To-night!" I exclaimed. "Oh, yes, to-night, and for ever. I will devote my whole life to him,—I will be his slave, his servant, any thing, every thing he likes."

"Then he likes you to be his friend, dear George; and I shall go and tell him. Oh, he will be so happy!" and she darted from the room; but before I had recovered the whirl of excitement my own words had raised within me, she was again there! Bright, beautiful child! how my eye followed each graceful movement, as lightly and noiselessly as a bird, she flitted round me! What living music there was in the glad tones of her young voice! With what beautiful — child as she was — with what beautiful, womanly tenderness did she busy herself about my comforts,—acting, with all her pretty ways, the part of hostess to her strange guest. "You have eaten nothing to-day," she said; "how hungry you must be! but Gray shall bring you food,—poor, old Gray, — he looks so happy now, so different from a little time ago. He used to carry us about when we were babies, you know; and that is the reason he is so fond of Evan. But who would not love Evan!"

Then again — "I am so glad you have chosen this room for yourself. You can come and sit here very often; and then you will have all those dusty volumes, that you and Evan are so fond of, about you, without the trouble of carrying them to that rocky nook of ours in the wood." And then, prattling on in the gaiety of her heart, she told me many things that, though from time to time they had occurred to me before, I had always cast back as impossibilities.

The visits of Evan, even of the little Lucy Lindsay, had, I found, from the very first,

met not only with the sanction but approval of the Lord and Lady Lindsay. The choice of books brought to me were not, as I concluded, the selection of Evan alone, but of his father. The sentiments he expressed, the arguments he used, to accustom me to my situation, were at the instigation of another. And the entreaties that I should take up my residence at the Castle, though in the first instance the impulse of his own feelings, and proposed by himself, were now, as I had seen, renewed by their desire.

And the Lord Lindsay, he had seen me,—he had seen the miserably-distorted being to whom he offered protection; the homeless wretch, to whom he offered a home; the friendless creature, to whom he was willing to be a friend. And this was the world in which I had said there was no good thing,—these were the beings at whose very name my inmost soul had once trembled!

Upon the morning following that which had seen me so unexpectedly installed in the Castle, I was led by the little Lucy to the door of her brother's room. "We must be quite quiet," she said, in a whisper, and pressing her pretty finger on her lips, "we must speak low." She unclosed the door as she uttered the last words; and, advancing a few steps, I stood by the side of my friend and benefactor.

I had schooled my feelings, and thought I had mastered them; but the sight of his pale and suffering countenance overcame me, and I sank upon my knees, clasping in mine the hand that feebly and with evident pain he had extended towards me.

"Thank you, dear George," he said in a low voice; "how kind in you to grant my request; but we shall make you happy, indeed we shall."

I heard no more, for at that moment a soft hand was laid gently on my shoulder, and a voice, that seemed like the breath of the wild flowers I loved, so soft, so low, so shadowy was the sound, repeated the words of Evan,—"Yes, we shall make you happy. Rise, my poor boy, look up, I have a right to welcome you to your new home, as well as my son."

This was again a new era, another and total change in my way of life; and more opposite states of existence than my past and present can surely scarcely be imagined. Then, despairing, lost; now with a song of joyfulness ever in my heart, a hymn of praise for God's mercies, a well-spring of happiness, round whose blessed margin floated those best portions of our nature, love and gratitude—gratitude to God and man.

Evan Lyndsay rapidly recovered, and my post in the sick room was now exchanged for his companionship in the study, the library, or in those long strolls which we still continued to indulge.

I shared with my friend in the judicious tuition of Mr. Morton; I drank in wisdom from the benevolent lips of Lord Lindsay; I dwelt in a perpetual sunshine of kindly feeling; and it is no wonder if the depressed and miserable spirit of the boy, warming under that influence, bounded within him; and that he felt, as he progressed to manhood, that whatever was his outward form, there was that within, which, by a whole life's devotion, an unwearying, undying effort, might at last in some degree repay the debt of gratitude he owed his benefactors.

During the first two years of my sojourn at the Castle, there was but one drawback to my happiness. It was the thought of those who, in my hours of agony having cast me off, were now, (when my better fortunes they might think rendered me independent of them,) restrained, perhaps, by pride from accepting those overtures to which, in my increasing happiness, my heart day by day more strongly urged me; and the bitter pang of knowing that, without one farewell, one parting blessing,—the first I should ever have received, perhaps the last I ever might receive from the lips of a parent,—they had left me, quitting home and country for a distant land, long darkened my spirit with some of its former anguish. The yearning for the love of parents closed for a time my heart against the countless blessings around me; but at length the one poisoned drop in the cup of life, bitter as it was, faded into indistinctness: the void in my heart was filled; the love of the stranger became sacred to me, as that of my own blood; the voice of my benefactors as the voice of parents; and he! Evan! was not he still like a bright ray of glory, ever circling round my heart!

In the occasional and brief absences of the family from the Castle, I was not alone.—Under the superintendence of Evan Lindsay, small rooms in the most ancient part of the building had been fitted up with every attention to my peculiar comfort; and here, surrounded by each favourite pursuit, encompassed by pleasant memories, I passed my time. And then those blissful reunions, the long-looked for hour of return, that came at

length, and brought with it so much of peace, and joy, and gladness. The springing step, the graceful carriage of the boyish figure, the laughing softness of the dark lustrous eyes, the whole beaming beauty of the speaking countenance, when Evan Lindsay, flying to my distant tower, and bursting upon me with his ringing laugh, would upbraid me with indifference, coldness, carelessness, of their return,—I who, he well knew, panted to be the first to welcome them; whom he feigned not to see, was gasping for breath, sinking under the intensity of feelings, all gratitude, all joy, at their return.

Year after year had now passed on, and they had brought with them an increase of peace and joy to the being rescued from perdition,—an increase of Heaven's blessings and Earth's prosperity to his rescuers. Yes! an angel of peace and gladness surely hovered over that blessed family.

Evan Lindsay had, by his own request, during the two years previous to his coming of age, been accompanied by his family to the Continent. It was now the eve of their return; and it was hailed with all that eagerness and delight which our Scottish peasantry know so enthusiastically how to feel, and to express, towards a gracious and respected landlord.

The village-bells rang gaily out; the long avenues were lined with the multitude of hearts that showered blessings on their path; and shouts long and loud, and hearty cheers, with cries of, "Long life to him! long life to the young heir! long life to our young master! may he prove as good a landlord as his father; we cannot wish a better," announced to those at the Castle, that the carriages, having entered the gate, were winding swiftly through the happy, noisy group.

"This is well, George! this is as it ought to be," exclaimed Evan Lindsay, springing from the low britska, that a little in advance of the other carriage had whirled rapidly to the door. "This is as it ought to be! I thought you would be here; not crouching in that solitary tower of yours." And, every feature sparkling with happiness, he wrung my hand in his.

I had indeed not been able to resist the impulse of welcoming upon their own threshold, the return of my benefactors; but the excitement of the scene had nearly overpowered me — and the ringing laugh, the joyous accents of my first best friend were changed, for the eager, hurried inquiry of whether all was well, all happy with me? Before collecting my ideas, I convinced myself, that though the boy I had so loved was lost to me—that he, Evan, as he stood before me, in all the graceful beauty of early manhood, was still my Evan, still the open-hearted, loving, trusting, generous Evan of my childhood.

"Here they are, here they come at last," he exclaimed, joyfully bounding from my side, as the next carriage stopped under the lofty portico. "Now, Lucy, we shall make our old walls resound with the joy we feel on re-entering them. Welcome, my dear father, welcome, dearest mother, to your own walls. Mine was the first foot to touch the soil of my bonny Castle Dower, and therefore it is I do the honours upon the occasion. But here is George, who has a better right still, for he has never quitted the dear old roof, while we have been wandering under the sunny skies, and through the sunny plains of Italy." And while the Lord and Lady Lindsay, with kindly looks, and lips quivering with emotion, called up by the demonstrations of gladness at their return, greeted me with an almost parental blessing, I felt my hand clasped in the soft small hands of Lucy Lindsay. Two years ago she had quitted the Castle, a child,—she was now but fifteen, and she stood before me, with all the gentle dignity, all the reserved kindliness of a woman's manner.

How beautiful she was, beautiful from the extreme regularity of feature, beautiful from the mind and soul that shone in her lovely countenance,—beautiful, too, in the child-like innocency of every thought and word.

Often as I have gazed upon her, or listened to the words of interest and kindness falling so gently from her lips, I have felt in my inmost soul that she resembled a being of another world, rather than an inhabitant of this,—one sent to soothe rather than to dazzle, to be looked upon at a holy distance rather than worshipped with an earthly love. Yet already was Lucy Lindsay the object of such worship; and often as, hour after hour, I have from my turret window watched her graceful, bird-like movements, so sedulously attended by her young companion, I have prayed that no blight, no canker of unhappy love, such as I had read of, might ever have power to wither that young flower.

Upon the evening when the whole party had returned from the Continent, in the engrossing feeling of the moment, I had not remarked Evan Lindsay's companion; nor

even when introduced to me by name as the young Earl of Walmer, an orphan, and distant relation of the Lady Lindsay, did I at first recognise in him the manly, proud, and petulant boy, who had some years ago accompanied Evan, during one of his vacations, to Castle Dower.

Even at that time, proud, vindictive, unmanageable as he was, the little Lucy Lindsay already possessed a power over him. And the mixture of feeling and reserve with which he reminded me of one circumstance of his former visit, proved that power still existing. It had indeed escaped my memory; for I considered myself at the time but too severely avenged, by the chastisment inflicted by Evan, as the young earl, with thoughtlessness, perhaps heartlessness, scoffed at my appearance.

What the indignant reproaches of Evan could not achieve, the silent tears of Lucy at once accomplished; and it was at her suggestion, that, hastening towards me, no apology seemed too humble, no promise of future amendment in himself, no future advancement to me through his interest, sufficient to blot out the memory of his boyish insult. "How gentle she looks," he went on with emotion, "one would scarcely imagine such a creature likely to tame a spirit so opposite to her own, and yet she has done so; the little good that is in me, I owe to her."

Shut out I was for ever from all love but that which grew from pity and commiseration. The precious ties of blood, the human love and loveliness that hangs round the name of parent, and a thousand other of life's purest, holiest, loftiest emotions, these were debarred me; these were the heritage of human joy, in which I had, and could have no portion. But once more I formed myself an ideal world; and, feeling with them, living as it were in and for them, I basked in the sunshine and the happy love of those two beings; while, hour by hour, that passion, which was to sway their after life, grew and strengthened in their young hearts.

His very life seemed but her spirit's will,

and she loved him with all the fervent affection, the clinging, trusting devotedness of woman's love.

* * * * * *

Long years have passed since then, and time has worked its change upon all—time has silvered over the hair of the narrator. Time has laid one reverend head in the dust. Time has borne one of the gentlest beings, the meekest of Christ's followers, to her home of glory, there to reap the reward of that seed which she had sown on earth. Yes, lovely were they in their lives, and the hand of death did not long divide them. Her hair silvered, her benign countenance still bearing the beauty of expression and feeling on the wasted features, the Lady Lindsay had sunk to sleep. And the partner of her life's happiness, he was also her partner through "the valley of the shadow of death." She slept first; but the calm smile of the old man, as turning from the weeping group, and fixing the last long gaze of affection on the placid features of the dead, he whispered, "Thou hast first won thy crown of glory; but I will follow thee soon," seemed to speak of a spirit already winging its flight. And so it was he passed away.

Much of gladness, much much beyond the usual portion of gladness granted in this world, had been theirs in life. Those beings in whose happiness their happiness was bound up, had not they grown in worth and loveliness under their eyes? had not they, year by year, seen them crowned with all earth's choicest blessings? and from that day, when the walls of the little village church, decked by the zealous care of many a grateful dependant, had witnessed the double union of their children, was not the place of their own gentle Lucy scarcely felt to be vacant, so lovingly was it filled by another?

The chosen bride, the beloved wife of Evan, was scarcely less dear to the hearts of the parents. It was the rich melodious voice of Susan Lindsay that now, like a glad bird, carolled blithely through every hill and dale of Glenullen; it was she, who, with all a daughter's love, hung upon the footsteps of Lady Lindsay, learning from her to dispense sunshine and gladness as she went; and she it was, who at nightfall, crouching at the feet of Lord Lindsay, would, with his hand clasped in hers, and those soft eyes raised lovingly to his face, prattle on of her day's labours,—all that she and Evan had done or meant to do. And Lucy, too! how often would she come, gladdening their hearts with a consciousness of her secured happiness, and the certainty that she lay in the heart of her husband, like the jewel on which his whole existence hung.

Ah, these were blessed meetings, when every change that passed over those who in that circle were all in all to each other, seemed but to add new grace and loveliness to the happy band.

The childhood of Evan and Lucy Lindsay was re-acted in the childhood of their children;

and the young fair faces of the two brides gradually assumed the less brilliant, not less lovely look of the happy matrons.

Then there was the springing up to boyhood and manhood of the second Evan—the child of that child who had been my preserver. The growing loveliness of those two peerless beings, Susan and Lucy Lindsay! Such, such has been the rich requital of Heaven for works of mercy to one, the lowliest of his children! Such the blessings that have begirt my path with brightness.

And now the evening of my day is drawing on, and the shadows have not lengthened, nor the sun gone down. The cheerlessness of age affects me not; the body is enfeebled, but the spirit waxes stronger as the frame decays. I feel my immortality, my glorious heritage on high, drawing nearer and nearer; the light shines stronger, the hope burns brighter within me. Yes, my old age is glad and tranquil, not merely in the absence of disquietude, but in the abiding spirit of peace and hope.

THE WHITE FAWN.

A SKETCH OF A DOMESTIC INCIDENT, OCCURRING IN THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE GENESEE.

BY COLONEL JOHNSON.

A NEW country, which receives a constant influx of emigration from most other parts of the earth, and of which the pioneer settlers are essentially enterprising, furnishes specimens of improvement and advance, at once so sudden and extensive, as to excite the greatest astonishment on a second visit after a few years' interval.

Such a country is the United States of America; and we have witnessed such rapid transitions from a wild to a cultivated condition as almost overwhelm the imagination. A statement of facts which have fallen under our own observation, in reference to this matter, would, to an European unacquainted with the subject, be deemed quite apocryphal. For instance, when young, we threaded the windings of Indian *trails*, without other highways, through all that garden of America, now known as Western New York, when the country, through its length and breadth, was a solitary forest: its silence never having been broken, save by the yells of savage tribes, and the howlings of beasts of prey.

At the present time, the same country presents a high state of cultivation: its fields wave with corn, and are covered by flocks and herds; canals and railways chequer the land; mills, factories, and divers machinery moved by wheels, mingle their clangour with the sound of the waterfalls; cities, villages, towns, boroughs, and hamlets have sprung up as if by enchantment; and the eye of the traveller, as he now takes his way over that fruitful region, will be delighted as he beholds on every hand, villas, terraces, and sun-lit spires, which beautify the vales, and gild the mountains of that enchanting country. We have stood upon the spot now occupied by the city of Rochester, when wolves, and owls, and panthers were its only inhabitants; and when the dark forest-trees hung over, and half concealed the waters of the Genesee, which irrigate the city. The place now has forty thousand inhabitants, and is called the Birmingham of America.

The country of which we first spoke, is bounded on the north by Lake Ontario; east by the Oneida country; south by the spurs of the Alleghany; and west by Lake Erie and the Niagara river; containing about thirty large counties, or seven hundred townships of six miles square, through the centre of which flows the Genesee river. This stream rises on the summit-level of the Alleghanies, and, after scooping out frightful caverns in the rocky mountains, it flows in a north-east direction through a most luxuriant and enchanting vale, for a hundred miles; and passing through Mount-Morris, Geneseo, Avon, and Rochester, empties itself into Lake Ontario.

It was in the valley of this river that the new settlements of Western New-York commenced; and some of the incidents connected with the settlers' intercourse with the savage tribes bordering on that river, are well worth a place in the history of the New World.

Shall we be indulged in relating a domestic incident, which came to our knowledge in our early acquaintance with that country, and through the very parties who bore the most prominent part in the occurrence?

Some time after the Revolutionary war, an English company purchased a large tract of land on the east side of the Genesee river,

and in 1798, sent out their agent, Major Williamson, to survey, and make sale of the said land. The Major was a Scottish gentleman of the old school, broad in his dialect, precise and rigid in his manners, stubborn and inexorable in his disposition, and a severe disciplinarian in his family and among his dependants.

It was well for the Major that he had no patriot neighbours, (for neighbours had he none of any sort,) so soon after the Revolutionary struggle; for, whatever of good nature and kindness might be manifested by a Yankee population, in other respects, at that period, they could not treat a "British Tory" with the least toleration.

The Major's family consisted of his wife and three daughters, the eldest of whom, Mary by name, was an enthusiastic, lively, and beautiful girl, of seventeen years of age. The life tints to her portraiture cannot better be given, than by antithesis or contrast with her father: while he was sordid, morose, and severe, Mary was generous, bland, and full of youthful glee; and yet, with all this contrast, Mary Williamson was the idol of her father. With the above exception, it was not known that the Scottish agent had other attachment, unless pertinacity to his own way in every thing, an overweening nationality, and a bigoted reverence for the Presbyterian faith, may be called *attachment*. This much, at all events, was true concerning him, that his surveyors, clerks, and servants feared and trembled in his presence, and hated him; while all the Indian tribes in the surrounding country detested him. Indians, of course, do not obtain their knowledge of men and things from books or from the schools; they may not be enabled to conjugate Greek verbs, or give you the major or the minor proposition of an argument; or to tell you whether they have arrived at their conclusions by induction, or *a priori*; perhaps they cannot always tell the why or the wherefore of their preferences and dislikes; yet, they manifest an instinctive acumen in their perception of human character, which makes it always safe to place confidence where they do so, and *vice versa*.

It is never good policy in a land-agent, acting in a country where savage tribes still linger around the graves of their forefathers, to be too magisterial in asserting the strict *allodial* rights of domain, until those tribes shall have melted away under the progress of civilisation, and the actual occupancy by white settlers.

In neglecting this precaution, the Major had incurred the resentment of his red neighbours, who regarded him as an intruder upon their ancient rights of fishing and hunting, which they alleged had been guaranteed to them by the Great Spirit himself. Among other aggressions, the agent had burned the wigwams of the hunters in his vicinity, desecrated the Indian graves, forbidden hunting over the mountains, and fishing in the streams which fell within the boundaries of the Pultney and Hornby estates; the persons of those names being the principals for whom Major Williamson was agent. In regard to the wigwams, forests, and brooks, perhaps, had these been alone concerned, the Indians might have surrendered them without contest; but when the palings of their fathers' graves had been broken down, and their consecrated grounds devoted to profane use, forbearance was no longer a virtue. It is an ancient custom with the Indians to bury their dead in a sitting posture, with their warlike and hunting implements by their side; each is furnished with a pot of parched corn, to provision him on his way to the land of the celestial rangers; and when the body is thus interred, the tribe to which he belonged build over the grave a *tumulus* of enduring wood, on which is carved and painted various devices and hieroglyphics, emblematical of the character and supposed destiny of the deceased. The grave thus completed, is enclosed by a wooden paling, which is preserved by tar and Indian paints, from generation to generation, and the spot is for ever deemed sacred from intrusion or secular use. The wandering tribes themselves pass by these hallowed receptacles in solemn silence, unless they pause for devotion; and wo be to the pioneer who profanes these sacred mansions of the dead!

On one occasion, Major Williamson, meeting with a small hunting party of natives, and being aided by his surveyors, violently took from the Indians a slaughtered buck and a string of trout, which he alleged had been unlawfully taken on the grounds and from the streams belonging to the great landowners across the waters. The Indians made no words, nor offered any resistance; but as they saw the fruits of their chase and angling disappear, they exchanged significant looks among themselves, and involuntarily emitted the well-known guttural exclamation *Ugh!*

Mary Williamson, on the contrary, and as an exception to the whole family, was a special favourite with the natives. She

seized the occasions of her father's absence to visit their wigwams, and make presents to their females of milk, bread, needles, and those little things which they deemed highly valuable. Indians bestow names upon pioneers, which, in their own native dialect, are most expressive of looks, qualities, and traits of character. They called Mary Williamson *Awei-natau*, which, by interpretation, signifies "WHITE FAWN;" and her sweet and amiable deportment towards them had so won them over to her, that they would go on foot, and even barefoot, by night and by day, to gratify her wishes, and to serve her in any thing she desired.

It occurred on an afternoon of a summer's day, that while the Agent and his family were at tea, they were visited by a person at whose appearance they were not a little surprised. His dress was that of an Indian chieftain, such as we have often seen, while those heroes of the forest were in their native glory, before they had become subdued and crest-fallen by their intercommunion with the vulgar vices of white men.

We now aver, that when we have seen fifty chiefs and warriors in company, clad as Indian hunters, and riding in a single line along their native *trails*, with their dress and armour sparkling in the sunbeams, they have presented a more imposing and formidable appearance than any other troops we ever saw, the Turkish cavalry not excepted.

Well, a young man, habited as an Indian, stood in the midst of Major Williamson's family, while they were assembled in the principal parlour. But what made the stranger an object of surprise in particular was, that his age did not exceed twenty-five years; besides, his complexion, hair, and eyes determined him to be other than a native Indian. Now, Indians never become chieftains of their respective tribes, until they are some forty years of age; and the fact was then unknown to the agent, that any white man ever attained to that distinction. The youth bore the searching scrutiny of the present company without the least embarrassment; and although no seat was offered to him, his majestic and noble bearing could not fail to impose deferential respect upon all who gazed upon him.

"What has brocht ye here, my man, at sic a time o' day?" inquired the imperious agent, as he half arose from his seat beside the tea-table.

"I am here," said the stranger, answering in imperfect English, though with a voice and manner accustomed to command, "to request Major Williamson to respect the rights of the aborigines, more than he has been wont to do of late."

"Hoot, man!—and wha are ye, to mak yersel sae deevilish busy in a matter that's naething to you?" replied the testy Scot.

"But, sir, it is *much* to me," rejoined the youth; "my relation to these scattered tribes makes it my duty to redress their wrongs, and to protect them in their ancient privileges." By this time Mary had arisen from her seat, and placed a chair beside the stranger; and though she spoke not, to interrupt her father, her eyes and attitude directed the young chief to a seat.

"An whaurfore suld *ye* make a soor mooth, at ma gangings on to thae pagan infidel ne'er-doweels, wham ye specify?" inquired the agent.

"I have this reason," said the stranger, "that in all our treaties with the government, wherein we have ceded to them our prescriptive right to lands, we have reserved the use of unoccupied forests and rivers, for the purposes of our game and fish; and have especially provided for the repose of our sleeping dead, that their bones should not be turned up by the white man's plough, and left to crumble upon the surface, and bleach in the sun-beams. Besides, sir, we need not the authority of treaties to establish our right to the game and fish taken on our own reservations; and I caution you, in respect to your own safety, that you restore to my hunting men the buck and fish of which you forcibly deprived them, and hereafter leave the graves of the ancient warriors unmolested."

The Major ill concealed his ire at this bold lecture from the mouth of a stranger, coming in "so questionable a shape;" yet he perceived by the attitude, the eye, the voice, and the undaunted carriage of the speaker, that he was not to be trifled with. The agent therefore waved the present subject of conversation, and inquired of the youth, how it occurred that his lot had been cast among these savage tribes, as it was quite apparent that his blood was unmixed European?—The stranger answered in short, that, when at twelve years of age, he had been taken prisoner in Pennsylvania, by the puissant Brandt, on his return from the well known massacre at Wyoming he ran the Indian gauntlet at that early age; by which he not only saved his life, but won the admiration of his savage captors, who procured his adoption into the family of the Seneca chief, whom he

now succeeded in command, and to a chieftain's honours.

"But," replied the Scot, "oh, man! but ye maun hae been powerfully inclined to evil, even as the sparks flee upwards, for a spunkie like you to hae confabbled sae young wi' sic a posse o' rampin, riotous, red-hot rebels. What say ye to that, man?"

"I say," replied the youth, "that my father, who was with me when I was captured, lived a patriot, and died a martyr in his country's cause, engaged against the aggressions of Great Britain."

"A martyr! deil rin awa wi' siccan martyrs—in whause cause?—Oo ay, the said deil, ye'r faither's. Aggressions too! there's impidince. Could his Majesty mak aggressions intil his ain? I'll tell ye what—he suld hae strapped up the thievin' blaggairds that said sae, like a wheen tykes, a' bitten wi' the same madness!"

"He must have caught us first," replied the stranger, with great complacency; "but we put our trust in God, who delivered us out of the king's hand."

"Ower true, man, ower true; ye put yeer trust in *yeer* God, and he delivered ye in his auld fashion, frae the pains an' penalties o' your injured king and offended Maker for awhile, till,—but there's nae matter."

The Scotsman's ire arose with his eloquence; and, rising from his seat, he motioned toward the door, and too plainly indicated by his gestures, what in words would read—"Begone from my house."

The youth walked away with the dignity of a commanding general on a retreat; but not till he had bestowed two glances of a most opposite character; the one was on the Major, and it was that of supreme and withering contempt; the other was on Mary Williamson, and it was full of kindness and courteous benignity.

On the morning of the fourth day after the above-mentioned interview, a spectacle of a singular character was witnessed not thirty rods from the agent's dwelling; the body of a large animal was seen hanging up by the gambrels, in the manner of hanging up a slaughtered bullock; it was eviscerated and well dressed; but it appeared much larger than a buck, and was the subject of so much wonder to the men, that the Major himself was called upon to inspect the affair. On coming to the spot, the agent well nigh burst with rage and astonishment on discovering it to be his favourite saddle-horse, which he had imported from the old world, in consideration of its supposed good qualities. On looking at the large forest trees standing around the spot, the agent perceived, carved on one of them an Indian, with his rifle and fishing-rod; on another, a slaughtered buck: and on a third, a string of fish. This had been done by the tomahawk on the bark of the trees. The allusion was too direct to escape the Major's apprehension. It said, as plainly as hieroglyphics could say; "Remember how you robbed us of venison and fish:—This is Indian revenge." But the favourite horse—the Major felt the retaliation disproportioned to the provocation. It grieved him to the very heart; and no doubt, had this dispensation remained singly on the mind of the Scot, he would have brooded over it for weeks and months together. But in the evening of the same day, the whole Williamson family met with a disaster which overwhelmed them all in insupportable anguish, and obliterated the remembrance of the horse entirely from their minds. Mary had been noticed on that afternoon, as was frequently her wont, to stroll out into the contiguous forest, with her needle-work in her hand, followed by her father's favourite dog. No notice would have been taken of the occurrence, had she returned in her usual time; but tea hour arrived, and no eldest daughter to grace the board at that social and blissful domestic treat; twilight approached, and still the flower of Williamsville came not. Now the Major, though generally ignorant of woodland scenes, had experienced enough in the bush to know that it was an easy thing to get bewildered and lost in an interminable forest, such as surrounded his dwelling-place; yet he had confidence in his dog, which by instinct had proved himself a safe conductor in all that part of the country over which he had followed the game.

The whole family becoming thus concerned and alarmed at the absence of Mary, without providing lights, or making other preparations to go forth into the wilderness, rushed out in various directions from the house, ringing bells, blowing horns, and calling aloud on the name of their favourite. The female domestics, and ladies of the family, however, took good care not to lose sight of the house, lest their own condition should become as desperate as that of the lost Mary's. The men, more heroic, taking the direction pursued by the young lady, penetrated into the wilds for two hundred rods; where, coming near to a spring of water, which Mary had been known to visit on previous occasions, their alarm was much increased, by their

finding the dead body of the Major's dog, stuck up upon a pole, twenty feet above the ground. Further search proving fruitless, and a dark night settling down in solitude upon the boundless forests, the party suspended the search, and returned to the house, in order to hold a consultation, and resolve on what next should be done to recover the lost.

It need not be said, that the house of the agent was a scene of distress for the whole of that night — a distress which agitated every bosom, pierced every heart, and shook even the faith of the worthy Scot himself in the righteousness of this dispensation — a dispensation not only inscrutable, but unendurable. In his evening prayers, which were offered up with a faltering voice, and when the devotee made an effort to reconcile himself to this severe rebuke of the Divine hand, he quoted from Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away;" — but, coming to a sudden pause, and without repeating — "blessed be the name of the Lord," as in the text, he added, in sudden transition, "restore unto us our *lost inheritance*, and the joys of thy salvation."

By morning light all hands were out in search for the lost treasure; yet nothing but the sacrificed dog could be found, to give a clue to Mary's fate. For six succeeding days was this fruitless search continued, till the heart sickened over the thought of poor Mary's fate; and when inquiry was made of hunting parties of Indians, with which the searchers frequently met, they got for answer, "We don't know" — "What does Pale-face want?" — till at length, wearied out by their hopeless endeavours, the bereft and agonized family gave over in despair.

We must now leave Williamsville for the present, to look after the safety of *The White Fawn*. Let the reader imagine to himself a mad river, bursting through interposing mountains, and towering quarries of granite, reared into frowning and fantastic forms, ploughing for itself a deep channel, and by its ceaseless eddies scooping out subterranean caverns and shelving caves on either side of its current, and he will have a true picture of the upper section of Genesee river, in its eternal warfare with the Alleghany mountains. Imagine at an offset of rock, about midway between the surface of the upper bank, and the present face of the boiling stream, a natural cave, formed by the whirling eddies of the river, some thousands of years since, before the channel was cut so deep; the cave being left high and dry, by the water's receding, as the bed of the stream had become lowered by the wearing away of the subaqueous rocks. Imagine this rocky room completed by Indian art, and covered by bears' skins, and containing a bed of buffalo robes, and you have a drawing of the present abode of Mary Williamson. But, alas for poor Mary! the agitations of her mind occasioned by her captivity, operating with other predisposing causes of disease, had thrown her into a violent fever, in which she lay upon the fur bed above described, in a state of intermitting delirium. Now the Indians attribute all disease and sickness to the agency of evil spirits, which, at war with the Great Good Spirit, are ever busy in marring His beauteous works, and afflicting His earthly creatures; and although their skilful old women administer to the afflicted sufferer decoctions of curative herbs, whose virtues are best known to themselves; yet the chief reliance of their wise men for a cure, is on certain charms and incantations, in which their prophets and astrologers bear a conspicuous part; they repeating ejaculations of exorcism, while their people are singing the wizard chant, and dancing around a boiling caldron of mystic compounds. As *The White Fawn* was an especial favourite with the natives, the whole tribe was put in requisition to collect materials, and prepare ingredients for this solemn ceremony. Nightshade was gathered in the moonlight; digitalis and dragonteeth were cut up by a wild boar's tusk; the entrails of the checkered adder, hearts of frogs, and eyes of lizards, with many other cabalistic ingredients, were procured to make up the compound of the mystic caldron.

And now, all being assembled around the spot, and as many as could be accommodated in the cave having entered there, the ceremony commenced by the monotonous sound of their *tumdrums;* which was followed by the wizard dance, into which the performers threw the most wild and fantastic gesticulations, distorting their faces with unearthly writhings and demoniac contortions. The caldron bubbled and smoked within the wizard ring, and the charm was working to admiration, as the prophets alleged, when their devout work was suddenly arrested, and the enchantment broken by an alarm from without, occasioned by the approach of an armed and hostile force. It must here be recorded that Major Williamson, after the long fruitless search for his daughter above recited, had become convinced that she had been

captured and carried off a prisoner by the Indians; and in his haste, and reckoning without his host, he had adopted the dangerous expedient of effecting her rescue *vi et armis.* For this purpose, he had placed firearms in the hands of all his surveyors, clerks, and other dependants; and buckling on his military armour, which whilom had begirt his testy body as Major of a Caledonian regiment, he sallied forth, *en militaire*, to carry terror, and, if need be, destruction, into the Indian camp. The arrival of this puissant and warlike cavalcade near the scene of exorcism, arrested progress in the sacred rite, and broke the hallowed charm. The intruders were met at a short distance from the spot by a wily savage, who had learned a few words of the English language, and who, accosting the Major, said, "What want Pale-face here?"

"My daughter, my daughter!" was the passionate reply.

"Follow me, then," said the native; and taking his course up-stream, he conducted the party by a sinuous way, some forty rods distant from the first-mentioned cave, and descending a flight of natural stone steps, he came to an aperture from which issued a flickering light. "You must place your arms here before you go in," said the Indian,—which direction was instantly obeyed by the men of arms, without reflection; so engrossing and all-absorbing had become the anxiety of the father to gain the presence of his beloved daughter.

The party descended, and soon found themselves in a large rocky room; but the light reflected only the dim outlines of the place, without giving distinctness to any surrounding object. In a moment the wily conductor disappeared from the view of the party, and the ponderous rocky door by which they came in was heard to jar against the contiguous rocks, as it shut them in, closing up the aperture by which they had entered. The party made an effort to find a way out, by rushing towards the entering place; when suddenly a new light filled the cavern, discovering to their astonished gaze, standing or crouching on niches of rock, which rose on all sides like an amphitheatre, an hundred wild animals of the most frightful kind, among which were wolves, bears, catamounts, and panthers, glaring their fiery eyeballs terrifically, and showing their murderous teeth, as if about to spring upon them. The panic-stricken party instinctively huddled close together, in the centre of the room, like so many frightened sheep; but turning their eyes upward, whence the light streamed upon them, a new cause of horror shook every limb, and brought most of the company prostrate upon their faces. The light which they at first supposed to be a flambeau, or a pot of burning pitch, they now perceived to be the blazing face of what appeared to them some infernal demon, with eyes of flame, teeth of burning coals, and tongue of livid carbon. Never was a body of troops who sallied forth in the morning, heroically bent on deeds of noble daring, and already flushed with anticipated victory, so completely foiled, vanquished, and crestfallen, as was the Major's posse in their present forlorn condition, and all this without loss of life or ammunition. Men in a state of terror rarely reason; hence they are in no condition to attend to surrounding circumstances, and sift things to the bottom. Had the Major and his troops divested themselves of fear, and gone boldly forth, placing their hands on what appeared so terrific and appalling around them, they would have found nothing but stuffed skins of wild beasts, with painted isinglass eyes; and had they examined the awful light which so overwhelmed and prostrated them, they would have found it but burning tar placed within the cavity of a pumpkin, which had been scooped out, and its rind cut in such a manner, that the light shining through the carved interstices, presented the frightful appearance above described; in short, they would have found themselves comfortably situated within an Indian museum, which was lighted in a manner not uncommon among the savage tribes. The light gradually declined, and finally went out, leaving the party still surrounded by the frightful beasts, and in total darkness, where they remained without sleep until dawn of day. But, alas! no day dawned on the Major and his men. Pent up in the bowels of the earth, they had spent a fearful night; and now the rising sun, which shines on the evil and the good, was no sun to them; its rays could not pierce the superincumbent mass which formed an adamantine ceiling above and around them. At this juncture, a new cause of alarm, of a more tangible nature, threatened them with total destruction. They heard gurgling through the clefts of the rock a volume of water, as if a sluice-way had been opened, and a pond of water was let loose upon them; and in a moment the cavern in which they were, began to be filled with water. It rose up to their

knees, and was still rising, when the miserable men, cooped up in an adamantine tomb, as they were, and feeling the cold waters about to settle over them, relinquished all hopes of life, and in an agonizing prayer, offered up by the puritanic Major, in behalf of the whole troop, commended their souls to God. At this awful juncture, the ponderous door of the cave was thrown open; and the well-known features of their crafty guide, who had conducted them to that spot, wrinkled by an ironical smile, were presented before them.

"Hope Pale-face had good sleep," facetiously exclaimed the guide. "Come, now; sun he look out and say, time to go! *Joggo Kagenau!*"

The party needed no urging; they waded to the aperture in trembling anxiety to escape the peril, and were soon in the upper air; but their arms had disappeared!

When the Major, in awkward abashment, ventured to ask for the guns which his troops had left at the mouth of the cave, the Indian archly replied, "No have 'em—rifle no good for white man—he no good to shoot—he careless—sometimes he kill good Indian with rifle—then I be very sorry. I say now, go; *joggo!*"

The party took up their return march as much crest-fallen and in as sorry plight as were the valorous Don Quixotte and his trusty squire after their encounter with the windmill.

To understand this water-scene, the reader must be told that an aqueduct had been constructed to convey the water, from the falls of the river, which were but a few rods up-stream from this Indian museum, into the caves below, for the purpose of purifying and cooling them in the heat of summer; and by means of a wear, or gate, the water was shut out or let in at pleasure.

In order more effectually to terrify the besiegers, their arch conductor had in this instance stopped up the out-let, raised the said sluice-way, and thus effected the submersion above noted.

While the scenes above recorded were enacting in one cave, the curative charm was resumed and repeated in the other, without farther interruption, for the restoration of *The White Fawn;* who, being the darling of the tribe, nothing was left unessayed to expel the naughty demon from her, and bring the roses again upon her cheeks; and whether owing to the roots and herbs of the old women, the wizard enchantments of the astrologers and prophets, a vigorous constitution, or the blessing of God, Miss Williamson found herself much relieved on the following day.

It was toward evening of the same day, while the patient was sitting up in her bed, an unexpected visitant stood before her. A youth of graceful form and manly and noble bearing made his obeisance, as he entered the room, and greeted the damsel in English, offering the following apology,—"I regret, Miss Williamson, that in my absence to Buffalo, from which place I have just returned, my men should have committed so wanton an outrage upon your family and person. You must know that these savage tribes never practise the virtue of forgiveness. Though they are constant in their attachments, and untiring in the service of their friends, yet it is woven into their nature, and incorporated with their religion, to return wrong for wrong. They thought your father had injured them, and in retaliation they had resolved to burn his house this very night. Your forcible abduction from your home, which you deemed barbarous and cruel, was meant by these sons of the forest as an act of the greatest beneficence, viz.—they intended by it the saving of your own life from a fatal catastrophe which they had meditated against your father and his family. My unexpected return has prevented that catastrophe; and my authority over these tribes will prevent farther injury to Major Williamson; unless, by his own continued aggressions upon Indian rights, he exasperate them beyond the power of man to control them. I have now only to inquire how I may best serve Miss Williamson in this emergency?"

It need scarcely be said, that the speaker was no other than the handsome white chief, to whom Mary Williamson had offered a seat at her father's house, as before stated. "I desire," responded the young lady, with deep emotion, "to return to my father."

"I fear you are too weak at present for such an effort," said the chief; "but if your opinion be otherwise, nothing shall be wanting on my part to obtain the accomplishment of your wishes."

Mary's anxiety to relieve the apprehensions of her friends at home was so great, that it would brook no delay; so it was arranged that she should set off on the following morning. Arranged for this service was a wicker sedan, covered with the richest skins and softest furs which a wide-spread forest

and Indian skill could supply; a relay of eight young natives was selected as bearers; and three or four old nurses followed in the train, well furnished with febrifuges and cordials.

The party set off in the morning; but made short stages, lingering along the way, to give rest and refreshment to their favoured patient, so that Mary no more felt fatigue in the transit, than she would have done had she been lying at home in her own bedroom. Besides, the young lady was most agreeably surprised to find, that all the stopping-places on the journey were selected as being the most beautiful and enchanting spots in the forest; and were generally near some spring of pure water, where a fire had been recently kindled and left burning, over which her little sick-bed comforts could be readily dressed to her hand. She knew by this that a party must have preceded her, in order to prepare the way; and she felt that in the refinement and delicacy of the arrangements, the presence of a noble mind, and the hand of a master were manifest; and she could not abstract her thoughts from that captivating and generous young gentleman who promised her safe-conduct, but whom she had not seen on the journey. Ay, while on that very sedan, as *The White Fawn* in after life confessed to the writer of this narrative, her thoughts were to the following effect: "Whatever may have been the fortunes of that generous and high-minded white chief, by which he became associated with the savage tribes; yet in every movement of his limbs, in every word that drops from his lips, in every generous and dignified expression of his eyes and countenance, and from every high-born emotion that beats in the pulse of his heart, it is manifest that he is one of nature's noblemen; and I know not, if it were required, that my heart would be refused in requital to him for the obligations he has laid me under."

Such were the frank acknowledgments of *The White Fawn*, after the storms of forty winters, from the time referred to, had blanched her auburn locks, and the sublimated passion of the youthful maiden had given place to the staid sentiments of the elderly matron. But to resume. The leisure with which they travelled during the day, detained them on their journey until a late hour in the night; but just at evening's close, the old nurses, following previous instructions, administered to their patient a strong decoction of poppies, which unexpectedly to herself, and without her knowing the cause, threw the damsel into a profound sleep.

While the young lady remained in this condition, the party arrived at Williamsville, and set down the sedan at Major Williamson's door, long after his family had retired. All of them were now in profound sleep, unless, perchance, some frightful dreams were harassing their imaginations, of their beloved and lost one.

In a still and stealthy manner these light-footed runners conducted the sleeping virgin through the window of her lodging-room, by removing the casements, and laid her upon her own bed, ornamented and adorned as she was found in the morning; then fastening up the window as they found it, left all quiet, and vanished into the forests.

On the next morning, after a formal breakfast, partaken by the heart-stricken family without appetite, and in silent sadness; and after the chastened and mourning father had tried once more, but in vain, to bring their forlorn case before the throne of Heavenly Mercy, in their morning devotions; he took his way, instinctively shall we say, toward the bed-room of his adored one.

A view of her garments hanging around the room, and her handiwork in the fine arts, displayed in paintings, and embossed and fretted ornaments which adorned the walls of this little chamber, and which the fond father saw through the half-open door, had already filled his eyes with tears; when, in a moment after, Major Williamson fell suddenly, as if in a fit of apoplexy, insensible upon the floor! On the family running to know the cause of this loud fall, their eyes were fixed in astonishment upon an object whose face appeared to be that of Mary Williamson. She still lay in a profound though calm slumber; and in addition to her usual attire, which appeared to have been just washed and neatly done up, was a profusion of silver brooches, amulets, and medals, covering her neck and breast. A mantle of the richest otter skin covered her shoulders, and other costly furs were spread under and around her; a coronal of wild flowers was fastened in a head-band, composed of scarlet silk, interwoven with painted beads and wampum, and surmounted with rows of pearls. On her feet was a brilliant pair of moccasins, such as we have elsewhere described; and, indeed, her whole appearance not only reflected high credit on the ingenuity of the native females, who wrought the trinkets, but would have well

become a fairy queen, or the lady of an enchanted castle. The arms of her mother thrown around her neck, and the tears of maternal love fast falling on her face, awoke the maiden; whose mingled emotions of surprise, joy, rapture, on finding herself thus surrounded by her friends, and in the arms of her mother, must be left to the reader's imagination. But the Major still remained upon the floor, where he had fallen. A phial of hartshorn, however, and a glass of cold water dashed into his face, aroused the too sensitive father from his swoon caused by fright; for it must be recorded that the Major, not less superstitious than he was obstinate, verily supposed that the object he beheld stretched on Mary's bed, was no other than her apparition appearing unto him. As he recovered, however, the mystery was explained; and the whole family group, arranged in Mary's bed-room, would have furnished a fine subject for the pencil of a skilful artist; but no artist being there, and we being no painters ourselves, the scene must be left, together with the exclamations, tears, kisses, congratulations, and ecstasies, to be filled up according to the reader's own fancy.

A few days after this event, Major Williamson's family received the accession of a divine just arrived "frae the land o' cakes," a man more distinguished by sectarian zeal and skill in polemics than by knowledge of the common affairs of life.

This reverend dignitary had come over the high seas, at the especial invitation of the Major, who had two objects to accomplish in his importation, namely, first, to establish what he believed the true scriptural faith in all the new settlements of the Genesee country; and, secondly, to provide a proper lord and husband for Miss Williamson.

The divine was about forty years of age, morose and sour in his disposition, cold and forbidding in his manners, a stranger to the warm impulses of the heart, and it took him but about two days to establish in the mind of his intended, who had pretty well recovered from her illness, a dislike to his person, and disgust at his pretensions.

Now it fell out a few weeks afterwards, that Williamsville was visited by one of those terrible demonstrations of God's power and awfulness, known as an American thunderstorm, of which an untravelled European can form no adequate conception from the miniature specimens of the like phenomena in his own country. The storm came on after night-fall, at which hour a number of native Indians presented themselves at the agent's door, asking for shelter from the rain. The Major, still sore from a recollection of his military vanquishment, refused admittance to them, and churlishly drove the poor fellows from his door; and they were obliged to hide themselves from the violence of the storm, under some tall oaks in the adjacent forest. But the storm increased in its fury; the rain descended in torrents; the lightnings gleamed in frightful corruscations through the dark forests; and the Almighty's presence was revealed by awful demonstration, in the voice of his terrible thunder, which jarred the habitation of the agent, and shook the foundation of the surrounding hills! In a moment, an electric shaft parted the roof of the mansion-house, scattered the shingles to the winds, split the rafters and beams, and set the chambers in a blaze of fire. The violent shock prostrated every inmate of the house to the ground; and Mary, who was alone in an upper bed-room, was struck insensible to the floor. The other members of the family rallied from the stunning shock, and were soon out of the house.

The Indians having looked out from the forest, and beheld the fated mansion in a blaze, were by this time gathered around the spot, and were active in carrying out the furniture and valuables from the consuming dwelling, to a place of safety; which aroused the Major to perceive that his house was inevitably devoted to destruction.

Intent on rescuing his family, he nervously looked around the group to count up their numbers, and assure himself of their safety, when he was heard to exclaim "My daughter! my daughter is still within the house! My God! who can rescue her from the flames?"

At that moment a youth from among the natives sprang with the rapidity of thought to the consuming walls, and dashing holes in the wooden side walls of the house by means of his tomahawk, formed steps by which he ascended to the window of the room where the young lady had fallen; and, bursting through the window, though met by wreathing flames of fire, and enveloped in a folding cloud of smoke, he seized the insensible Mary, and shrouding her in his blanket, which fortunately was saturated with rain, descended by the same steps, which had been already half-burned, and in this way reached the ground. But the effort was beyond human endurance; either by means of the suffocating smoke, or by some sudden wrench, an internal blood-vessel had become ruptured in the

young man; who, after falling to the ground with his precious burden, discharged copious quantities of blood from his mouth. In this condition the rescuer and the rescued lay on the ground together, when the before agonized, but now enraptured family came up to receive their restored member into their arms; who, though yet insensible, was not essentially injured either by the lightning's stroke, or by the fire that followed. But, considering the awful peril in which she had been placed, and that a few moments more must have proved fatal, Mary Williamson was indeed "a brand plucked out of the fire."

The Indians continued to remove the goods from the raging element, enacting feats of daring and agility surprising to the Europeans; by which vigilance all the papers and books, and most of the valuable furniture of the house, were saved. Meanwhile, Mary's generous deliverer had remained unattended, until, by loss of blood, he lay in a state of syncope, a breathing image of death.

The chastened family found temporary shelter in the Major's office, it being a separate building from the house; to which, by the kindness of Madam Williamson, the fainting deliverer of her daughter was removed, and laid upon a couch, where, though the rooms afforded but scanty accommodation for the family, he was permitted to remain, notwithstanding the Major had recognised in his guest the person of the white chief, who had so boldly lectured him in his own house.

The loss of blood had been so excessive, that nature seemed to have given over her efforts to rally; and after two days, all hopes of the youth's recovery were relinquished by his attendants. Among those attendants were Mr. M'Caul, the divine above mentioned, and Mary Williamson, the latter of whom having pretty well recovered from her electric shock, was a most interested and unremitting attendant. When it was announced by Mr. M'Caul, who administered as well for the body as the soul, (there being no physicians then in the country,) that the case of the young man was hopeless, the "White Fawn" suddenly became a "stricken deer:" she refused to be comforted. While these two attendants were together with their patient, the former observed very pragmatically that it would ill comport with his sacred functions, to permit the stranger to exchange worlds, which he appeared about to do, without furnishing him with the means for his passage; and laying the phials and gallypots aside, and taking the Holy Bible in his hand, he approached the bedside of the patient.

The ministrations of Mr. M'Caul had the happy effect of lulling the patient asleep, and the preacher, not quite satisfied with the fruits of his spiritual labour, left the room a little *miffed;* and did not return until the following day, when he found the young man quite recovered. In short, a crisis had taken place in his disease, and the energies of a vigorous constitution had been aroused to throw off morbid action, and restore the system to health. As the youth became convalescent, he grew more and more interested in his female nurse; protracting his stay for a fortnight, during which time, in addition to what Mary had learned previously of the young chief, she now heard from his own lips, that his name was Horatio Jones, who, young as he was, and still retaining the Indian costume, was known throughout the State as Major-General Jones, he having received that high commission from the government, in consideration of some heroic acts performed while yet a boy, in the late war, and the unbounded control he now exercised over all the Indian tribes of the West:—also that he had been enriched by Indian munificence, to an extent not exceeded by any capitalist of the New World. In short, *The White Fawn* exulted in having won the bravest heart, and in soon having the power to control the longest purse in all Western New York. In justice to the young lady's disinterestedness it should be recorded, that these factitious superiorities were not the motive which inclined her toward the young General; for with her characteristic sincerity, she was often heard to declare, in after life, that the heroic sacrifices which the young chief had made in her behalf, had so won her heart, before she knew his rank, that with no other possessions than his tomahawk and rifle, she would have become the partner of his toils. Before the General departed to rejoin his faithful tribes, the true lovers, though unknown to the agent and to the rest of his family, had exchanged vows, plighted their troth, and ratified it by affection's kiss.

Soon after the General's departure the following scene occurred in the Major's family circle.

"Mary, my daughter," said the Scot, "ye are surely a special object o' Almighty grace an' favour this day, to be letten hear the news I hae for ye. That reverend and holy man, Mr. M'Caul, has been sent doutless by Him who watcheth o'er his ain, all the way

across the wide sea, from Monteith, to offer ye his hand, to make ye his ain—to lead ye throo' the green pastures, and beside the still waters; and to conduct ye at last to the house of many mansions."

Mary, who had never been consulted by her parent in this holy purpose, and who, as before stated, had no inclination for the Preacher as her husband, could scarcely restrain herself at so abrupt and unwelcome an announcement; but suppressing her feelings, she calmly replied, "that she could never aspire to the honour of such a connexion."

"But the connexion is made;" said the Scot; "the contract signed and sealed."

"Never, never!" said the maid, rising in womanly pride, and indignant at what had been done in her name, and without her consent—"never shall any man receive my hand, but he who has my heart. You, as a father, may command me in all other things; and I as a daughter, under a full sense of filial obligations, shall feel bound to obey; but my affections are my own, the gift of the Almighty, and I have bestowed them on one who shall receive my hand also in God's own good time."

At this passionate declaration the Scot and his minister started from their seats in great surprise.

"Bestowed on one!" cried the father. "Who can he be?"

"On one whom you have treated as a savage foe," replied the daughter; "but one who has been your guardian angel, as well as mine. One who, though his fortune, even in tender years, made him an orphan and a captive, shutting him out from the advantages of civilized life, must have inherited the virtues of a worthy ancestry; he now exemplifying those noble traits which none but those made in the image of God, and in whom that image has not been defaced, by association with evil, can display. One whose fame is echoed throughout the land; who has attained the highest military command in the power of a grateful country to bestow. One who has covered you and yours as with a shield, jeoparding his own life to save your property, your life, and the lives of your whole family from premeditated destruction. My heart and my hand belong to Major-General Jones, by solemn contract, formed on earth, and ratified in heaven, and it shall never be bestowed on another."

The Scot was struck dumb; for he had just been reading in the "*Canandarque* [since Canandaigua] *Gazette*," the only newsprint then published in that vast region where three hundred are now published, a short memoir of Major-General Jones, wherein his heroic virtues, his unbounded wealth, his elevated rank, and his wide-spread influence were duly recorded; little thinking at the time that the white chief, whom he had scornfully driven from his door, and the famous Major-General were one and the same individual. The agent, though much addicted to having his own way, yet, perceiving how much more eligible would be the match which the parties themselves had contracted than the one he had designed, permitted for once his Scotch prudence to prevail over his parental authority; and turning to the minister, said, "Well-a-day, man, what is to be, can't be resisted. The lassie and her lad hae out-*general'd* us, and made the first covenant, which maun stand, for a' we have done."

When the General made his next visit to the agent's, the Major himself graciously arose to give him a seat; and the minister, though rather awkwardly, performed for the parties concerned the office which made them one.

And now, let the reader stand upon the elevated banks of the Genesee, as the writer of this has frequently stood, and cast his eyes over the enchanting domains known as Jones' Manor, where the country for miles around, blooming like the garden of God, belongs to one estate; let him be introduced to the General's intellectual sons, hear the music and admire the drawings of his accomplished and charming daughters, who adorn the highest circles of society;—let him sit down by the old General's side, as we have often done, for hours together, and listen to the anecdotes of the early settlements; and he will learn more than our pen can record of the early history of The White Fawn.

JOHNNY DARBYSHIRE, A PRIMITIVE QUAKER.

BY WILLIAM HOWITT.

It must have been remarked by the readers of "The Nooks of the World," in *Tait's Magazine*, and in my "Rural Life of England," that the people of the Midland Counties, particularly of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, have a singular practice of calling almost every body by diminutives of their Christian names, and seldom the plain, plump diminution of Tom, Jack, Jem, but Tommy, Jacky, Jemmy, and so on, generally ornamented with the prefix of *Old*, a word which in such use does not in the least denote age, for it is applied to youth, both in men and animals too, just as much as to age, and indicates only a familiar mode of expression.

Thinking it as well to notice this peculiarity as belonging to the people from amongst whom these sketches are drawn before I introduced another character with such an appellation, I will now also preface the introduction of Johnny Darbyshire with a few other remarks which may give a clear idea of his character, and of similar ones as we go along.

I have repeatedly alluded to and explained the perfect freedom of life, and the other concurring causes which go to produce such an extraordinary variety of character, and of most eccentric character in the Rural Nooks of England. In this truly patriarchal life the heads of families by their unlimited sway acquire often a most unlimited authority. They have no law but their own will, in the house, and scarcely any out of it. They, therefore, grow often not only most eccentric, but most wilful, arbitrary, overbearing, and humorsome. Of this class Johnny Darbyshire is a complete specimen.

John Darbyshire, or, according to the regular custom of the country,—Johnny Darbyshire, was a farmer living in one of the most obscure parts of the country, on the borders of the Peak of Derbyshire. His fathers before him had occupied the same farm for generations; and as they had been Quakers from the days of George Fox, who preached there and converted them, Johnny also was a Quaker. That is, he was, as many others were, and no doubt are, habitually a Quaker. He was a Quaker in dress, in language, in attendance of their meetings, and above all, in the unmitigated contempt which he felt and expressed for every thing like fashion, for the practices of the world, for the Church, and for music and amusements. There never was a man, from the first to the present day of the society, who so thoroughly embodied and exhibited that quality attributed to the Quaker, in the rhyming nursery alphabet,—"Q was a Quaker, and would not bow down."

No, Johnny Darbyshire would not have bowed down to any mortal power. He would have marched into the presence of the king with his hat on, and would have addressed him with just the same unembarrassed freedom as "The old chap out of the West Countrie," is made to do in the song. As to any of the more humble and conceding qualities usually attributed to the peaceful Quaker, Johnny had not an atom of those about him. Never was there a more pig-headed, arbitrary, positive, pugnacious fellow. He would argue any body out of their opinions by the hour; he would "threep them down," as he called it, that is, point blank and with a loud voice insist on his own possession of the right, and of the sound commonsense of the matter; and if he could not convince them, would at least confound them with his obstreporous din and violence of action. That was what he called clearing the field, and not leaving his antagonist a leg to stand on. Having thus fairly overwhelmed, dumfoundered, and tired out some one with his noise, he would go off in triumph, and say to the bystanders as he went,—"There, lads, you see he hadn't a word to say for himself;" and truly a clever fellow must he have been who could have got a word in edgeways when Johnny had once fairly got his steam up, and was shrieking and storming like a cat-o'-mountain.

Yet had any body told Johnny that he was no Quaker, he would have "threeped them down" that they did not know what a Quaker meant. What! were not his father, and his grandfather, and his great-grandfather before him all Quakers? Was not he born in the Society, brought up in it? Hadn't he attended first-day, week-day, preparative, monthly, quarterly, and sometimes yearly

meetings too, all his life? Had not he regularly and handsomely subscribed to the monthly, and the national, and the Ackworth School Stocks? Had he not been on all sorts of appointments; to visit new members, new comers into the meeting; to warn disorderly walkers; nay, had he not sate even on committees in London at yearly meetings? Had he not received and travelled with ministers when they came on religious visits into these parts? Had he not taken them in his tax-cart to the next place, and been once upset in a deep and dirty lane with a weighty ministering friend, and dislocated his collar-bone?

What? He not a Quaker! Was George Fox one, did they think; or William Penn, or Robert Barclay indeed?

Johnny Darbyshire *was* a Quaker. He had the dress, and address, and all the outward testimonies and marks of a Quaker; nay, he was more; he was an overseer of the meeting, and broke up the meetings. Yes, and he would have them to know that he executed his office well. Ay, well indeed; without clock to look at, or without pulling out his watch, or being within hearing of any bell, or any other thing that could guide him, he would sit on the front seat of his meeting where not a word was spoken, exactly for an hour and three quarters to a minute, and then break it up by shaking hands with the Friend who sate next to him. Was not that an evidence of a religious tact and practice? And had not the Friends once when he was away, just like people in a ship which had lost both rudder and compass, gone drifting in unconsciousness from ten in the morning till three in the afternoon, and would not then have known that it was time to break up the meeting, but that somebody's servant was sent to see what had happened, and why they did not come home to dinner?

Johnny could see a sleeper as soon as any, were he ensconced in the remotest and obscurest corner of the meeting, and let him hold up his head and sleep as cleverly as he might from long habit. And did not he once give a most notable piece of advice to a *rich* Friend who was a shocking sleeper? Was not this Friend very ill, and didn't Johnny go to see him; and didn't he, when the Friend complained that he could get no sleep, and that not all the physic, the strongest opium even of the doctor's shop, could make him, — didn't Johnny Darbyshire say right slap-bang out, which not another of the plainest-spoken Friends dare have done to a rich man like that, — "Stuff and nonsense; and a fig for opium and doctor's stuff, — send, man, send for the meeting-house bench, and lie thee down on that, and I'll be bound thou'lt sleep like one of the seven sleepers."

Undoubtedly Johnny was a Quaker; a right slap-dash Quaker of the old Foxite school; and had any body come smiling to him in the hope of getting any thing out of him, he would have said to him as George Fox said to Colonel Hackett, "Beware of hypocrisy and a rotten heart!" True, had you questioned him as to his particular religious doctrines or articles of faith, he would not have been very clear, or very ready to give you any explanation at all, for the very best of reasons, — he was not so superstitious as to have a creed. A creed! that was a rag of the old woman of Babylon. No, if you wanted to know all about doctrines and disputations, why, you might look into Barclay's Apology. There was a book big enough for you, he should think. For himself, like most of his cloth, he would confine himself to his *feelings*. He would employ a variety of choice and unique phrases; such as,—"If a man want to know what religion is, he must not go running after parsons, and bishops, and all that sort of man-made ministers, blind leaders of the blind, who can talk by the hour, but about what neither man, woman, nor child, for the life of them, can tell, except when they come for their tithes, or their Easter dues, and then they speak plain enough with a vengeance. One of these Common-Prayer priests," said he, "once came to advise me about the lawfulness of paying Church-rates, and instead of walking into my parlour, he walked through the next door, and nearly broke his neck, into the cellar. A terrible stramash of a lumber, and a plunging and a groaning we heard somewhere; and rushing out, lo and behold! it was no other than Diggory Dyson, the parish priest, who had gone headlong to the bottom of the cellar steps, and had he not cut his temples against the brass tap of a beer-barrel and bled freely, he might have died on the spot. And that was a man set up to guide the multitude! Had he been only led and guided by the Spirit of God, as a true minister should be, he would never have gone neck-foremost down my cellar steps. That's your blind leader of the blind!"

But if Johnny Darbyshire thought the "Common-Prayer priests" obscure, they must have thought him seven-fold so. Instead of

doctrines and such pagan things, he talked solemnly of "centring down;" "being renewedly made sensible;" "having his mind drawn to this and that thing;" "feeling himself dipped into deep baptism;" "feeling a sense of duty;" and of "seeing, or not seeing his way clear" into this or that matter. But his master phrase was "living near to the truth;" and often, when other people thought him particularly provoking and insulting, it was only "because he hated a lie and the father of lies." Johnny thought that he lived so near to the truth, that you would have thought Truth was his next-door neighbour, or his lodger, and not living down at the bottom of her well as she long has been.

Truly was that religious world in which Johnny Darbyshire lived, a most singular one. In that part of the country, George Fox had been particularly zealous and well received. A simple country people was just the people to be affected by his warm eloquence and strong manly sense. He settled many meetings there, which, however, William Penn may be said to have unsettled by his planting of Pennsylvania. These Friends flocked over thither with, or after him, and left a mere remnant behind them. This remnant, and it was like the remnant in a draper's shop, a very old-fashioned one, continued still to keep up their meetings, and carry on their affairs as steadily and gravely as Fox and his contemporaries did, if not so extensively and successfully. They had a meeting at Codnor Breach, at Monny-Ash in the Peak, at Pentridge, at Toad-hole Furnace, at Chesterfield, &c. Most of these places were thoroughly country places, some of them standing nearly alone in the distant fields; and the few members belonging to them might be seen on Sundays, mounted on strong horses, a man and his wife often on one, on saddle and pillion, or in strong tax-carts; and others, generally the young, proceeding on foot over fields and through woods, to these meetings. They were truly an old-world race, clad in very old-world garments. Arrived at their meeting, they sate generally an hour and three-quarters in profound silence, for none of them had a minister in them, and then returned again. In winter they generally had a good fire in a chamber, and sate comfortably round it.

Once a-month, they jogged off in similar style to one of these meetings in particular, to what they called their monthly meeting, where they paid in their subscriptions for the poor, and other needs of the society, and read over and made answers to a set of queries on the moral and religious state of their meetings. One would have thought that this business must be so very small that it would be readily despatched, but not so. Small enough, Heaven knows! it was; but then they made a religious duty of its transaction, and went through it as solemnly and deliberately as if the very salvation of the kingdom depended on it. Oh what a mighty balancing of straws was there! In answering the query, whether their meetings were pretty regularly kept up and attended, though perhaps there was but half-a-dozen members to one meeting, yet would it be weighed and weighed again whether the phrase should be, that it was "pretty well attended," or "indifferently attended," or "attended, with some exceptions." This stupendous business having, however, at length been got through, then all the men adjourned to the room where the women had, for the time, been just as laboriously and gravely engaged; and a table was soon spread by a person agreed with, with a good substantial dinner of roast-beef and plum-pudding; and the good people grew right sociable, chatty, and even merry in their way; while, all the time in the adjoining stable, or, as in one case, in the stable under them, their steeds, often rough, wild creatures, thrust perhaps twenty into a stable without dividing stalls, were kicking, squealing, and rioting in a manner that obliged some of the good people occasionally to rise from their dinners, and endeavour to diffuse a little of their own quietness among them. Or in summer their horses would be all loose in the grave-yard before the meeting, rearing, kicking, and screaming in a most furious manner; which, however, only rarely seemed to disturb the meditations of their masters and mistresses.

And to these monthly meetings over what long and dreary roads, on what dreadfully wet and wintry days, through what mud and water, did these simple and pious creatures, wrapped in great-coats and thick cloaks, and defended with oil-skin hoods, travel all their lives long? Not a soul was more punctual in attendance than Johnny Darbyshire. He was a little man wearing a Quaker suit of drab, his coat long, his hat not cocked but slouched, and his boots well worn and well greased.

Peaceful as he sate in these meetings, yet out of them, as I have remarked, he was a very Tartar, and he often set himself to

execute what he deemed justice in a very dogged and original style. We may, as a specimen, take this instance. On his way to his regular meeting he had to pass through a toll-bar; and being on Sundays exempt by law from paying at it, it may be supposed that the bar-keeper did not fling open the gate often with the best grace. One Sunday evening, however, Johnny Darbyshire had, from some cause or other, stayed late with his friends after afternoon meeting. When he passed through the toll-gate he gave his usual nod to the keeper, and was passing on; but the man called out to demand the toll, declaring that it was no longer Sunday night, but Monday morning, being past twelve o'clock.

"Nay, friend, thou art wrong," said Johnny, pulling out his watch: "see, it yet wants a quarter."

"No, I tell you," replied the keeper, gruffly, "it is past twelve. Look, there is my clock."

"Ay, friend, but thy clock like thyself doesn't speak the truth. Like its master, it is a little too hasty. I assure thee my watch is right, for I just now compared it by the steeple-house clock in the town."

"I tell you," replied the keeper, angrily, "I've nothing to do with your watch: I go by my clock, and there it is."

"Well, I think thou art too exact with me, my friend."

"Will you pay me or not?" roared the keeper; "you go through often enough in the devil's name without paying."

"Gently, gently, my friend," replied Johnny; "there is the money: and it's really after twelve o'clock, thou says?"

"To be sure."

"Well, very well: then for the next twenty-four hours I can go through again without paying?"

"To be sure; every body knows that."

"Very well, then I now bid thee farewell." And with that, Johnny Darbyshire jogged on. The gate-keeper chuckling at having at last extorted a double toll from the shrewd Quaker, went to bed, not on that quiet road expecting farther disturbance till towards daylight; but, just as he was about to pop into bed, he heard some one ride up and cry, "Gate!"

Internally cursing the late traveller, he threw on his things and descended to open the gate, when he was astonished to see the Quaker returned.

"Thou says it really *is* past twelve, friend?"

"To be sure."

"Then open the gate: I have occasion to ride back again."

The gate flew open, Johnny Darbyshire trotted back towards the town, and the man, with double curses in his mind, returned up stairs. This time he was not so sure of exemption from interruption, for he expected the Quaker would in a while be coming back homewards again. And he was quite right. Just as he was about to put out his candle, there was a cry of "Gate." He descended, and behold the Quaker once more presented himself.

"It really *is* past twelve, thou says?"

"Umph!" grunted the fellow.

"Then, of course, I have nothing more to pay. I would not, however, advise thee to go to bed to-night, for it is so particularly fine that I propose to enjoy it by riding to and fro here a few hours."

The fellow, who now saw Johnny Darbyshire's full drift, exclaimed, "Here, for God's sake, sir, take your money back, and let me get a wink of sleep."

But Johnny refused to receive the money, observing, "If it *was* after twelve, then the money is justly thine; but I advise thee another time not to be *too* exact," and with that he rode off.

Such was his shrewd, restless, domineering character, that his old friend, the neighbouring miller, a shrewd fellow too, thought there must be something in Quakerism which contributed to this, and was therefore anxious to attend their meetings, and see what it was. How great, however, was his astonishment, on accompanying Johnny, to find about half a dozen people all sitting with their hats on for a couple of hours in profound silence; except a few shufflings of feet, and blowing of noses; and then all start up, shake hands, and hurry off.

"Why, Master Darbyshire," said the dry old miller; "how is this? Do you sit without parson or clerk, and expect to learn religion by looking at your shoe toes? By Leddy! this warn't th' way George Fox went on. He was a very talking man, or he wouldna ha' got such a heap of folks together, as he did. You've clearly gotten o' th' wrong side o' th' post, Johnny, depend on 't; an' I dunna wonder now that you've dwindled awee so."

But if Johnny was as still as a fish at the Quaker meetings, he had enough to say at home, and at the parish meetings. He had such a spice of the tyrant in him, that he could not

even entertain the idea of marrying, without it must be a sort of shift for the mastery. He, therefore, not only cast his eye on one of, the most high-spirited women that he knew in his own society, but actually one on the largest scale of physical dimensions. If he had one hero of his admiration more than another, it was a little dwarf at Mansfield, who used to wear a soldier's jacket, and who had taken it into his head to marry a very tall woman, whom he had reduced to such perfect subjection, that he used from time to time to evince his mastery by mounting a round table and making the wife walk round it while he belaboured her lustily with a strap.

Johnny, having taken his resolve, made no circumbendibus in his addresses; but one day, as he was alone in the company of the lady, by name Lizzy Lorimer, — "Lizzy," said he, "I'll tell thee what I have been thinking about. I think thou'd make me a very good wife."

"Well," replied Lizzy; "sure isn't that extraordinary? I was just thinking the very same thing."

"That's right! Well done, my wench,— now that's what I call hitting the nail on the head, like a right sensible woman!" cried Johnny, fetching her a slap on the shoulder, and laughing heartily. "That's doing the thing now to some tune. I'm for none of your dilly-dally ways. I once knew a young fellow that was desperately smitten by a young woman, and though he could pluck up courage enough to go and see her, he couldn't summon courage enough to speak out his mind when he got there; and so he and the damsel sate opposite one another before the fire. She knew well enough all the while,—you're sharp enough, you women, — what he was after; and there they sate and sate, and at last he picked up a cinder off the hearth, and looking very foolish, said, 'I've a good mind to fling a cowk at thee!' At which the brave wench, in great contempt, cried, 'I'll soon fling one at thee, if thou artn't off!' That's just as thou'd ha' done, Lizzy, and as I shouldn't," said Johnny, gaily, and laughing more heartily than before.

That was the sum and substance of Johnny Darbyshire's courtship. All the world said the trouble would come afterwards; but if it did come, it was not to Johnny. Never was chanticleer so crouse on his own dung-hill, as Johnny Darbyshire was in his own house. He was lord and master there to a certainty. In doors and out, he shouted, hurried, ran to and fro, and made men, maids, and Lizzy herself, fly at his approach, as if he had got a whole cargo of Mercury's wings, and put them on their feet. It was the same in parish affairs; and the fame of Johnny's eloquence at vestries is loud to this day. On one occasion there was a most hot debate on the voting of a church-rate, which should embrace a new pulpit. Johnny had hurt his foot with a stub of wood as he was hurrying on his men at work in thinning a plantation. It had festered and inflamed his leg to a terrible size; but, spite of that, he ordered out his cart with a bed laid in it, and came up to the door of the vestry-room, where he caused himself to be carried in on the bed, and set on the vestry-room floor, not very distant from the clergyman. Here he waited, listening first to one speaker and then another, till the debate had grown very loud, when he gave a great hem; and all were silent, for every one knew that Johnny was going to speak.

"Now, I'll tell you what, lads," said Johnny; "you've made noise enough to frighten all the jackdaws out of the steeple, and there they are flying all about with a pretty cawarring. You've spun a yarn as long as all the posts and rails round my seven acres, and I dunna see as you've yet hedged in so much as th' owd wise men o' Gotham did, and that's a cuckoo. I've heard just one sensible word, and that was to recommend a cast-iron pulpit, in preference to a wooden 'un. As to a church-rate to repair th' owd steeple-house, why, my advice is to pull th' owd thing down, stick and stone, and mend your roads with it. It's a capital heap o' stone in it, that one must allow, — and your roads are pestilent bad. Down with the old daw-house, I say, and mend th' roads wi't, and set th' parson here up for a guide-post. Oh! it's a rare 'un he'd make; for he's always pointing th' way to the folks, but I never see that he moves one inch himself."

"Mr. Darbyshire," exclaimed the clergyman, in high resentment, "that is very uncivil in my presence, to say the least of it."

"Civil or uncivil," returned Johnny; "it's the truth, lad, and thou can take it just as thou likes. I did not come here to bandy compliments; so I may as well be hanged for an old sheep as for a lamb — we'll not make two mouthfuls of a cherry; my advice is then to have a cast-iron pulpit, by all means, and while you are about it, a cast-iron parson, too. It will do just as well as

our neighbour Diggory Dyson here, and a plaguy deal cheaper, for it will require neither tithes, glebe, Easter-dues, nor church-rates!"

Having delivered himself of this remarkable oration, to the great amusement of his fellow-parishioners, and the equal exasperation of the clergyman, Johnny ordered himself to be again hoisted into his cart, and rode home in great glory, boasting that he had knocked all the wind out of the parson, and if he got enough again to preach his sermon on Sunday, it would be all.

It was only on such occasions as these that Johnny Darbyshire ever appeared under the church roof. Once, on the occasion of the funeral of an old neighbour, which, for a wonder, he attended, he presented himself there, but with as little satisfaction to the clergyman, and less to himself.

He just marched into the church with his hat on, which, being removed by the clergyman's orders, Johnny declared that he had a good mind to walk out of that well of a place, and would do so only out of respect to his old neighbour. With looks of great wrath he seated himself at a good distance from the clergyman; and as this gentleman was proceeding, in none of the clearest tones certainly, to read the appropriate service, Johnny suddenly shouted out, "Speak up, man, speak up! What art mumbling at there, man? We canna hear what thou says here!"

"Who is that?" demanded the clergyman, solemnly, and looking much as if he did not clearly perceive who it was. "Who is that who interrupts the service? I will not proceed till he be removed."

The beadle approached Johnny, and begged that he would withdraw.

"Oh!" said Johnny, aloud, so as to be heard through all the church, "I'll sit i' th' porch. I'd much rather. What's the use sitting here where one can hear nothing but a buzzing like a bee in a blossom?"

Johnny accordingly withdrew to the porch, where some of his neighbours, hurrying to him when the funeral was about to proceed from the church to the grave, said, "Mr. Darbyshire, what have you done? You'll as surely be put into th' spiritual court, as you're a living man. You'd better ax the parson's pardon, and as soon as you can."

Accordingly, as soon as the funeral was over, and the clergyman was about to withdraw, up marched Johnny to him, and said, "What, I reckon I've affronted thee with bidding thee speak up. But thou *should* speak up, man; thou should speak up, or what art perched up aloft there for. But, however, as you scollards are rayther testy, I know, in being taken up before folks, I mun beg thy pardon for 't'arno." *

"Oh, Mr. Darbyshire," said the clergyman, with much dignity, "that will not do, I assure you. I cannot pass over such conduct in such a manner. I shall take another course with you."

"Oh, just as tha' woot. I've axed thy pardon, haven't I? and if that wunna do, why thou mun please thysen!"

Johnny actually appeared very likely to get a proper castigation this time; but, however it was, he certainly escaped. The parishioners advised the clergyman to take no notice of the offence, — every body, they said, knew Johnny, and if he called him into the spiritual court, he would be just as bold and saucy, and might raise a good deal of public scandal. The clergyman, who, unfortunately, was but like too many country clergymen of the time, addicted to a merry glass in the village public-house, thought perhaps that this was only too likely, and so the matter dropped.

For twenty years did Johnny Darbyshire thus give free scope to tongue and hand in his parish. He ruled paramount over wife, children, house, servants, parish, and every body. He made work go on like the flying clouds of March; and at fair and market, at meeting and vestry, he had his fling and his banter at the expense of his neighbours, as if the world was all his own, and would never come to an end. But now came an event, arising, as so often is the case, out of the merest trifle, that more than all exhibited the indomitable stiffness and obstinacy of his character.

Johnny Darbyshire had some fine, rich meadow land, on the banks of the river Derwent, where he took in cattle and horses to graze during the summer. Hither a gentleman had sent a favourite and valuable blood mare to run a few months with her foal. He had stipulated that the greatest care should be taken of both mare and foal, and that no one, on any pretence whatever, should mount the former. All this Johnny Darbyshire had most fully promised. "Nay, he was as fond of a good bit of horse-flesh as any man alive, and he would use mare and foal just as if they were his own."

This assurance, which sounded very well

* For what I know.

indeed, was kept by Johnny, as it proved, much more to the letter than the gentleman intended. To his great astonishment, it was not long before he one day saw Johnny Darbyshire come riding on a little shaggy horse down the village where he lived, leading the foal in a halter.

He hurried out to inquire the cause of this, too well auguring some sad mischief, when Johnny, shaking his head, said—"Ill luck, my friend, never comes alone; it's an old saying, that it never rains but it pours; and so it's been with me. T'other day I'd a son drowned, as fine a lad as ever walked in shoe-leather; and in hurrying to th' doctor, how should luck have it, but down comes th' mare with her foot in a hole, breaks her leg, and was obligated to be killed; and here's th' poor innocent foal. It's a bad job, a very bad job; but I've the worst on't, and it canna be helped; so, prithee, say as little as thou can about it,—here's the foal, poor, dumb thing, at all events."

"But what business," cried the gentleman, enraged, and caring, in his wrath, not a button for Johnny Darbyshire's drowned son, in the exasperation of his own loss,—"but what business had you riding to the doctor, or the devil, on my mare? Did not I enjoin you, did you not solemnly promise me, that nobody should cross the mare's back?"

Johnny shook his head. He had indeed promised "to use her as his own," and he had done it to some purpose; but that was little likely to throw cold water on the gentleman's fire. It was in vain that Johnny tried the pathetic of the drowning boy; it was lost on the man who had lost his favourite mare, and who declared that he would rather have lost a thousand pounds—a hundred was exactly her value—and he vowed all sorts of vengeance and of law.

And he kept his word, too. Johnny was deaf to paying for the mare. He had lost his boy, and his summer's run of the mare and foal, and that he thought enough for a poor man like him, as he pleased to call himself. An action was commenced against him, of which he took not the slightest notice till it came into court. These lawyers, he said, were dear chaps, he'd have nothing to do with them. But the lawyers were determined to have to do with him, for they imagined that the Quaker had a deep purse, and they longed to be poking their long, jewelled fingers to the bottom of it.

The cause actually came into court at the assizes, and the counsel for the plaintiff got up and stated the case, offering to call his evidence, but first submitted that he could not find that any one was retained on behalf of the defendant, and that, therefore, he probably meant to suffer the cause to go by default. The court inquired whether any counsel at the bar was instructed to appear for Darbyshire, in the case Shiffnal *v.* Darbyshire, but there was no reply; and learned gentlemen looked at one another, and all shook their learned wigs; and the judge was about to declare that the cause was forfeited by the defendant, John Darbyshire, by non-appearance at the place of trial, when there was seen a bustle near the box of the clerk of the court; there was a hasty plucking off of a large hat, which somebody had apparently walked into court with on; and the moment afterwards a short man, in a Quaker dress, with his grizzled hair hanging in long locks on his shoulders, and smoothed close down on the forehead, stepped, with a peculiar air of confidence and cunning, up to the bar. His tawny, sun-burnt features, and small dark eyes, twinkling with an expression of much country subtlety, proclaimed him at once a character. At once a score of voices murmured—"There's Johnny Darbyshire himself!"

He glanced, with a quick and peculiar look, at the counsel, sitting at their table with their papers before them, who, on their part, did not fail to return his survey with a stare of mixed wonder and amazement. You could see it as plainly as possible written on their faces,—"Who have we got here? There is some fun brewing here to a certainty."

But Johnny raised his eyes from them to the bench, where sat the judge, and sent them rapidly thence to the jury-box, where they seemed to rest with a considerable satisfaction.

"Is this a witness?" inquired the judge. "If so, what is he doing there, or why does he appear at all, till we know whether the cause is to be defended?"

"Ay, Lord Judge, as they call thee, I reckon I am a witness, and the best witness too that can be had in the case, for I'm the man himself; I'm John Darbyshire. I didn't mean to have any thing to do with these chaps i' their wigs and gowns, with their long, dangling sleeves; and I dunna yet mean to have ony thing to do wi' 'em. But I just heard one of 'em tell thee, that this cause was not going to be defended; and that put my monkey up, and so, thinks I, I'll

e'en up and tell 'em that it will be defended though; ay, and I reckon it will too; Johnny Darbyshire was never yet afraid of the face of any man, or any set of men."

"If you are what you say, good man," said the judge, "defendant in this case, you had better appoint counsel to state it for you."

"Nay, nay, Lord Judge, as they call thee, —hold a bit; I know better than that. Catch Johnny Darbyshire at flinging his money into a lawyer's bag! No, no. I know them chaps wi' wigs well enough. They've tongues as long as a besom steal, and fingers as long to poke after 'em. Nay, nay, I don't get my money so easily as to let them scrape it up by armfuls. I've worked early and late, in heat and cold, for my bit o' money, and long enough too, before these smart chaps had left their mother's apron-strings; and let them catch a coin of it, if they can. No! I know this case better than any other man can, and for why? Because I was in it. It was me that had the mare to summer; it was me that rode her to the doctor; I was in at th' breaking of th' leg, and, for that reason, I can tell you exactly how it all happened. And what's any of those counsellors,—sharp, and fine, and knowing as they look, with their tails and their powder,—what are they to know about the matter, except what somebody'd have to tell 'em first? I tell you, I saw it, I did it, and so there needs no twice telling of the story."

"But are you going to produce evidence?" inquired the counsel for the other side.

"Evidence? to be sure I am. What does the chap mean? Evidence? why, I'm defender and evidence and all!"

There was a good deal of merriment in the court, and at the bar, in which the judge himself joined.

"There wants no evidence besides me; for, as I tell you, I did it, and I'm not going to deny it."

"Stop!" cried the judge, "this is singular. If Mr. Darbyshire means to plead his own cause, and to include in it his evidence, he must be sworn. Let the oath be administered to him."

"Nay, I reckon thou need put none of thy oaths to me! My father never brought me up to cursing and swearing, and such like wickedness. He left that to th' ragamuffins and rapscallions i' th' street. I'm no swearer, nor liar neither,—thou may take my word safe enough."

"Let him take his affirmation, if he be a member of the Society of Friends."

"Ay, now thou speaks sense, Lord Judge. Ay, I'm a member, I warrant me."

The clerk of the court here took his affirmation, and then Johnny proceeded.

"Well, I don't feel myself any better, or any honester now for making that affirmation. I was just going to tell the plain truth before, and I can only tell th' same now. And, as I said, I'm not going to deny what I've done. No! Johnny Darbyshire's not the man that ever did a thing and then denied it. Can any of these chaps i' th' wigs say as much? Ay, now I reckon," added he, shaking his head archly at the gentlemen of the bar, "now I reckon you'd like, a good many on you there, to be denying this thing stoutly for me? You'd soon persuade a good many simple folks here that I never did ride the mare, never broke her leg, nay, never saw her that day at all. Wouldn't you, now? wouldn't you?"——

Here the laughter, on all sides, was loudly renewed.

"But I'll take precious good care ye *dunna!* No, no! that's the very thing that I've stepped up here for. It's to keep your consciences clear of a few more additional lies. Oh dear! I'm quite grieved for you, when I think what falsities and deceit you'll one day have to answer for, as it is."

The gentlemen, thus complimented, appeared to enjoy the satire of Johnny Darbyshire; and still more was it relished in the body of the court.

But again remarked the judge, "Mr. Darbyshire, I advise you to leave the counsel for the plaintiff to prove his case against you."

"I'st niver oss!" exclaimed Johnny, with indignation.

"I'st niver oss!" repeated the judge. "What does he mean?—I don't understand him," and he looked inquiringly at the bar.

"He means, my lord," said a young counsel, "that he shall never offer,—never attempt to do so."

"That's a Darbyshire chap now," said Johnny, turning confidentially towards the jury-box, where he saw some of his county farmers. "He understands good English."

"But good neighbours there," added he, addressing the jury, "for I reckon it's you that I must talk to on this business; I'm glad to see that you are, a good many on you, farmers like myself, and so up to these things. To make a short matter of it then,—I had the mare and foal to summer; and the gentleman laid it down, strong and fast, that she shouldn't be ridden by any body. And I promised him

that I would do my best, that nobody should ride her. I told him that I would use her just as if she was my own,—and I meant it. I meant to do the handsome by her and her master too; for I needn't tell you, that I'm too fond of a bit of good blood to see it willingly come to any harm. Nay, nay, that never was the way of Johnny Darbyshire. And there she was, the pretty creature, with her handsome foal, cantering and capering round her in the meadow; it was a pleasure to see it, it was indeed! And often have I stood and leaned over the gate and watched them, till I felt a'most as fond of them as of my own children; and never would leg have crossed her while she was in my possession had that not happened that may happen to any man, when he least expects it.

"My wife had been ill, very ill. My poor Lizzy, I thought I should ha' certainly lost her. The doctors said she must be kept quiet in bed; if she stirred for five days she was a lost woman. Well, one afternoon as I was cutting a bit of grass at th' bottom o' th' orchard for the osses, again they came from ploughing the fallows; I heard a shriek that went through me like a baggonet. Down I flings th' scythe. 'That's Lizzy, and no other!' I shouted to myself. 'She's out of bed,—and, goodness! what can it be? She's ten to one gone mad with a brain fever!' There seemed to have fallen ten thousand millstones on my heart. I tried to run, but I couldn't. I was as cold as ice. I was as fast rooted to the ground as a tree. There was another shriek more piercing than before —and I was off like an arrow from a bow—I was loose then. I was all on fire. I ran like a madman till I came within sight of th' house; and there I saw Lizzy in her night-gown with half her body out of the window, shrieking and wringing her hands like any crazed body.

"'Stop! stop!' I cried, 'Lizzy! Lizzy! back! back! for heaven's sake!'

"'There! there!' screamed she, pointing with staring eyes and ghastly face down into the Darrant that runs under the windows.

"'Oh God!' I exclaimed, 'she'll drown herself! she's crazed, she means to fling herself in—' groaning as I ran, and trying to keep crying to her, but my voice was dead in my throat.

"When I reached her chamber, I found her fallen on the floor—she was as white as a ghost, and sure enough I thought she was one. I lifted her upon the bed, and screamed amain for the nurse, for the maid, but not a soul came. I rubbed Lizzy's hands; clapped them; tried her smelling-bottle. At length she came to herself with a dreadful groan,—flashed open her eyes wide on me, and cried —'Didst see him? Didst save him? Where is he? Where is he?'

"'Merciful Providence!' I exclaimed. 'She's gone only too sure! It's all over with her!'

"'Where is he? Where's my dear Sam? Thou didn't let him drown?'

"'Drown? Sam? What?' I cried. 'What dost mean, Lizzy?'

"'Oh, John! Sammy!—he was drowning i' th' Darrant—oh! ——'

"She fainted away again, and a dreadful truth flashed on my mind. She had seen our little Sammy drowning; she had heard his screams, and sprung out of bed, forgetful of herself, and looking out, saw our precious boy in the water. He was sinking! He cried for help! there was nobody near, and there Lizzy stood and saw him going, going, going down! There was not a soul in the house. The maid was gone to see her mother that was dying in the next village; the nurse had been suddenly obliged to run off to the doctor's for some physic; Lizzy had promised to lie still till I came in, and, in the meantime—this happens. When I understood her I flew down stairs, and towards the part of the river she had pointed to. I gazed here and there, and at length caught sight of the poor boy's coat floating, and with a rake I caught hold of it, and dragged him to land. But it was too late! Frantic, however, as I was, I flew down to the meadow with a bridle in my hand, mounted the blood-mare,—she was the fleetest in the field by half, and away to the doctor. We went like the wind. I took a short cut for better speed, but it was a hobbly road. Just as I came in sight of the doctor's house there was a slough that had been mended with stones and fagots and any thing that came to hand. I pushed her over, but her foot caught in a hole amongst the sticks, and—crack! it was over in a moment.

"Neighbours, neighbours! think of my situation? Think of my feelings. Oh! I was all one great groan! My wife! my boy! the mare! it seemed as if Job's devil was really sent out against me. But there was no time to think; I could only feel, and I could do that running. I sprang over the hedge. I was across the fields, and at the doctor's; ay, long before I could find breath to tell him what was amiss. But he thought

it was my wife that was dreadfully worse. 'I expected as much,' said he, and that instant we were in the gig that stood at the door, and we were going like fire back again. But——"

Here Johnny Darbyshire paused; — the words stuck in his throat,—his lips trembled, —his face gradually grew pale, and livid, as if he were going to give up the ghost. The court was extremely moved: there was a deep silence, and there were heard sobs from the throng behind. The judge sate with his eyes fixed on his book of minutes, and not a voice even said — "Go on."

Johnny Darbyshire meantime, overcome by his feelings, had sate down at the bar, a glass of water was handed to him, — he wiped his forehead with his handkerchief several times, heaved a heavy convulsive sigh or two from his labouring chest, — and again arose.

"Judge, then," said he, again addressing the jury, "what a taking I was in. My boy — but no—I canna touch on that, he was — gone!" said he in a husky voice that seemed to require all his physical force to send it from the bottom of his chest.—"My wife was for weeks worse than dead, and never has been, and never will be herself again. When I inquired after the mare, — you can guess — when was a broken leg of a horse successfully set again? They had been obliged to kill her! ——

"Now, neighbours, I deny nothing. I wunna! — but I'll put it to any of you, if you were in like case, and a fleet mare stood ready at hand, would you have weighed any thing but her speed against a wife, and — a child? — No, had she been my own, I should have taken her, and that was all I had promised! But there, neighbours, you have the whole business, — and so do just as you like, — I leave it wi' you."

Johnny Darbyshire stepped down from the bar, and disappeared in the crowd. There was a deep silence in the court, and the very jury were seen dashing some drops from their eyes. They appeared to look up to the judge as if they were ready to give in at once their verdict, and nobody could doubt for which party; but at this moment the counsel for the plaintiff arose, and said:—

"Gentlemen of the Jury, — you know the old saying — 'He that pleads his own cause has a fool for his client.' We cannot say that the proverb has held good in this case. The defendant has proved himself no fool. Never in my life have I listened to the pleadings of an opponent with deeper anxiety. Nature and the awful chances of life have made the defendant in this case more than eloquent. For a moment I actually trembled for the cause of my client, — but it was for a moment only. I should have been something less than human if I had not, like every person in this court, been strangely affected by the singular appeal of the singular man who has just addressed you; but I should have been something less than a good lawyer if I did not again revert confidently to those facts which were in the possession of my witnesses now waiting to be heard. Had this been the only instance in which the defendant had broken his engagement, and mounted this mare, I should in my own mind have flung off all hope of a verdict from you. God and nature would have been too strong for me in your hearts; but, fortunately for my client, it is not so. I will show you on the most unquestionable evidence that it was not the first nor the second time that Mr. Darbyshire had mounted this prohibited but tempting steed. He had been seen, as one of the witnesses expresses it, 'frisking about' on this beautiful animal, and asking his neighbours what they thought of such a bit of blood as that. He had on one occasion been as far as Crich fair with her, and had allowed her to be cheapened by several dealers as if she were his own, and then proudly rode off, saying—'Nay, nay, it was not money that would purchase pretty Nancy,' as he called her." Here the counsel called several respectable farmers who amply corroborated these statements; and he then proceeded. "Gentlemen, there I rest my case. You will forget the wife and the child, and call to mind the 'frisking,' and Crich fair. But to put the matter beyond a doubt we will call the defendant again, and put a few questions to him."

The court crier called,—but it was in vain. Johnny Darbyshire was no longer there. As he had said, "he had left it wi'em," and was gone. The weight of evidence prevailed; the jury gave a verdict for the plaintiff — one hundred pounds.

The verdict was given, but the money was not yet got. When called on for payment, Johnny Darbyshire took no further notice of the demand than he had done of the action. An execution was issued against his goods; but when it was served, it was found that he had no goods. A brother stepped in with a clear title to all on Johnny's farm by a deed dated six years before, on plea of moneys advanced, and Johnny stood only as manager.

The plaintiff was so enraged at this barefaced scheme to bar his just claim, Johnny's bail sureties being found equally unsubstantial, that he resolved to arrest Johnny's person. The officers arrived at Johnny's house to serve the writ, and found him sitting at his luncheon alone. It was a fine summer's day, — every body was out in the fields at the hay. Door and window stood open, and Johnny, who had been out on some business, was refreshing himself before going to the field too. The officers entering declared him their prisoner. "Well," said Johnny, "I know that very well. Don't I know a bum-baily when I see him? But sit down and take something; I'm hungry if you ar'na, at all events."

The men gladly sate down to a fine piece of cold beef, and Johnny said — "Come, fill your glasses, — I'll fetch another jug of ale. I reckon you'll not give me a glass of ale like this where we are going."

He took a candle, descended the cellar, one of the officers peeping after him to see that all was right, and again sitting down to the beef and beer. Both of them found the beef splendid; but beginning to find the ale rather long in making its appearance, they descended the cellar, and found Johnny Darbyshire had gone quietly off at a back door.

Loud was the laughter of the country round at Johnny Darbyshire's outwitting of the bailiffs, and desperate was their quest after him. It was many a day, however, before they again got sight of him. When they did, it was on his own hearth, just as they had done at first. Not a soul was visible but himself. The officers declared now that they would make sure of him, and yet drink with him too.

"With all my heart," said Johnny; "and draw it yourselves, too, if you will."

"Nay, I will go down with you," said one; "my comrade shall wait here above."

"Good," said Johnny, lighting a candle.

"Now, mind, young man," added he, going hastily forwards towards the cellar steps,—"mind, I say, some of these steps are bad. It's a dark road, and — nay, here! — this way—follow me exactly."

But the man was too eager not to let Johnny go too far before him; he did not observe that Johnny went some distance round before he turned down the steps. There was no hand-rail to this dark flight of steps, and he walked straight over into the opening.

"Hold! — hold! Heavens! the man's gone—didn't I tell him!——"

A heavy plunge and a groan announced the man's descent into the cellar.

"Help! — help!" cried Johnny Darbyshire, rushing wildly into the room above. "The man, like a madman, has walked over the landing into the cellar. If he isn't killed, it's a mercy. Help!" snatching another candle; "but hold — take heed! take heed! or thou 'lt go over after him!"

With good lighting, and careful examination of the way, the officer followed. They found the other man lying on his back, bleeding profusely from his head, and insensible.

"We must have help! there's no time to lose!" cried Johnny Darbyshire, springing up stairs.

"Stop!" cried the distracted officer, left with his bleeding fellow, and springing up the steps after Johnny. But he found a door already bolted in his face; and cursing Johnny for a treacherous and murderous scoundrel, he began vainly denouncing his barbarity in leaving his comrade thus to perish, and kicked and thundered lustily at the door.

But he did Johnny Darbyshire injustice. Johnny had no wish to hurt a hair of any man's head. The officer had been eager and confident, and occasioned his own fall; and even now Johnny had not deserted him. He appeared on horseback at the barn where threshers were at work; told them what had happened; gave them the key of the cellar door, bade them off and help all they could; and said he was riding for the doctor. The doctor indeed soon came, and pronounced the man's life in no danger, though he was greatly scratched and bruised. Johnny himself was again become invisible.

From this time for nine months the pursuit of Johnny Darbyshire was a perfect campaign, full of stratagems, busy marchings, and expectations, but of no surprises. House, barns, fields, and woods, were successively ferretted through, as report whispered that he was in one or the other. But it was to no purpose; not a glimpse of him was ever caught; and fame now loudly declared that he had safely transferred himself to America. Unfortunately for the truth of this report, which had become as well received as the soundest piece of history, Johnny Darbyshire was one fine moonlight night encountered full face to face, by some poachers crossing the fields near his house. The search became again more active than ever, and the ruins of Wingfield Manor, which stood on a hill

not far from his dwelling, were speedily suspected to be haunted by him. These were hunted over and over, but no trace of Johnny Darbyshire, or any sufficient hiding-place for him, could be found, till, one fine summer evening, the officers were lucky enough to hit on a set of steps which descended amongst bushes into the lower parts of the ruins. Here, going on, they found themselves, to their astonishment, in an ample old kitchen, with a fire of charcoal in the grate, and Johnny Darbyshire with a friend or two sitting most cozily over their tea. Before they could recover from their surprise, Johnny, however, had vanished by some door or window, they could not tell exactly where, for there were sundry doorways issuing into dark places of which former experience bade them beware. Rushing up again, therefore, to the light, they soon posted some of their number around the ruins, and, with other assistance sent for from the village, they descended again, and commenced a vigilant search. This had been patiently waited for a good while by those posted without, when suddenly, as rats are seen to issue from a rick when the ferret is in it, Johnny Darbyshire was seen ascending hurriedly a broken staircase, that was partly exposed to the open day by the progress of dilapidation, and terminated abruptly above.

Here, at this abrupt and dizzy termination, for the space of half a minute, stood Johnny Darbyshire, looking round, as if calmly surveying the landscape, which lay, with all its greenness and ascending smokes of cottage chimneys, in the gleam of the setting sun. Another instant, and an officer of the law was seen cautiously scrambling up the same ruinous path; but, when he had reached within about half a dozen yards or so of Johnny, he paused, gazed upwards and downwards, and then remained stationary. Johnny, taking one serious look at him, now waved his hand as bidding him adieu, and disappeared in a mass of ivy.

The astonished officer on the ruined stair now hastily retreated downwards; the watchers on the open place around, ran to the side of the building where Johnny Darbyshire had thus disappeared, but had scarcely reached the next corner, when they heard a loud descent of stones and rubbish, and, springing forward, saw these rushing to the ground at the foot of the old Manor, and some of them springing and bounding down the hill below. What was most noticeable, however, was Johnny Darbyshire himself, lying stretched, apparently lifeless, on the greensward at some little distance.

On examining afterwards the place, they found that Johnny had descended between a double wall,—a way, no doubt, well known to him, and thence had endeavoured to let himself down the wall by the ivy which grew enormously strong there; but the decayed state of the stones had caused the hold of the ivy to give way, and Johnny had been precipitated, probably from a considerable height. He still held quantities of leaves and ivy twigs in his hands.

He was conveyed as speedily as possible on a door to his own house, where it was ascertained by the surgeon that life was sound in him, but that besides plenty of severe contusions, he had broken a thigh. When this news reached his persecutor, though Johnny was declared to have rendered himself, by his resistance to the officers of the law, liable to outlawry, this gentleman declared that he was quite satisfied; that Johnny was punished enough, especially as he had been visited with the very mischief he had occasioned to the mare. He declined to proceed any farther against him, paid all charges and costs, and the court itself thought fit to take no farther cognizance of the matter.

Johnny was, indeed, severely punished. For nearly twelve months he was confined to the house, and never did his indomitable and masterful spirit exhibit itself so strongly and characteristically as during this time. He was a most troublesome subject in the house. As he sate in his bed, he ordered, scolded, and ruled with a rod of iron all the women, including his wife and daughter, so that they would have thought the leg and the confinement nothing to what they had to suffer.

He at length had himself conveyed to the sitting-room or the kitchen, as he pleased, in a great easy chair; but as he did not satisfy himself that he was sufficiently obeyed, he one day sent the servant-girl to fetch him the longest scarlet bean-stick that she could find in the garden. Armed with this, he now declared that he would have his own way,—he could reach them now! And, accordingly, there he sate, ordering and scolding, and if not promptly obeyed, in his most extravagant commands, not sparing to inflict substantial knocks with his pea-prick, as he called it. This succeeded so well that he would next have his chair carried to the door, and survey the state of things without.

"Ay, he knew they were going on prettily. There was fine management, he was sure,

when he was thus laid up. He should be ruined, that was certain. Oh, if he could but see the ploughing and the crops, — to see how they were going on, would make the heart of a stone ache, he expected."

His son was a steady young fellow, and it must be known, was all the while farming, and carrying on the business much better than he himself had ever done.

"But he would be with them one of these days, and for the present he would see his stock at all events."

He accordingly ordered the whole of his stock, his horses, his cows, his bullocks, his sheep, his calves, his pigs, and poultry, to be all, every head of them, driven past as he sate at the door. It was like another naming of the beasts by Adam, or another going up into the Ark. There he sate, swaying his long stick; now talking to this horse and that cow. To the old bull he addressed a long speech; and every now and then he broke off to rate the farm-servants for their neglect of things. "What a bag of bones was this heifer; what a skeleton was that horse! Why, they must have been fairly starved on purpose; nay, they must have been in the pinfold all the time he had been laid up. But he would teach the lazy rogues a different lesson as soon as he could get about."

And the next thing was to get about in his cart with his bed laid in it. In this he rode over his farm; and it would have made a fine scene for Fielding or Goldsmith, to have seen all his proceedings, and heard all his exclamations and remarks, as he surveyed field after field.

"What ploughing! what sowing! Why, they must have had a crooked plough, and a set of bandy-legged horses to plough such ploughing. There was no more straightness in their furrows than in a dog's hind leg. And then where had the man flung the seed to? Here was a bit come up, and there never a bit. It was his belief that they must go to Jericho to find half of his corn that had been flung away. What! had they picked the windiest day of all the year to scatter his corn on the air in? And then the drains were all stopped; the land was drowning, was starving to death; and where were the hedges all gone to? Hedges he left, but now he only saw gaps!"

So he went round the farm, and for many a day did it furnish him with a theme of scolding in the house.

Such was Johnny Darbyshire; and thus he lived for many years. We sketch no imaginary character, we relate no invented story. Perhaps a more perfect specimen of the shrewd and clever man converted into the local and domestic tyrant, by having too much of his own humour, never was beheld; but the genus to which Johnny Darbyshire belonged is far from extinct. In the nooks of England there are not few of them yet to be found in all their froward glory; and in the most busy cities, though the great prominences of their eccentricities are rubbed off by daily concussion with men as hard-headed as themselves, we see glimpses beneath the polished surface of what they would be in ruder and custom-freer scenes. The Johnny Darbyshires may be said to be instances of English independence run to seed.

STORY OF FARQUHARSON OF INVEREY.

BY SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER, BART.

The ruins of the house of Inverey stand in the level bottom of the great valley of Braemar, not far from the point of junction between the little river Ey and the Dee, and immediately at the base of the southern hills, there rising with abrupt faces, partially but picturesquely wooded with birches and ancient firs. A few old ashes and some other trees that still grow around the walls, and some remains of garden enclosures, are now the only existing features calculated to lead the mind back to some conception of what may have been its state in former days; and the wretched hamlet of huts which have clustered in course of time to suffocation around it, now most naturally suggests the idea of some mighty oak choked, exhausted, and killed by the overgrowth of its parasitical plants. But, although these miserable dwellings appear as if they were now vegetating upon the nourishment afforded by the ruins of the house of Inverey, the ancestors of their present inmates were its stoutest props during the many generations in which it flourished; for many, I trow, were the bold hearts and trenchant blades, that issued from beneath such lowly roofs as these, to muster in its defence, whilst it was yet entire, whilst its hearth was

yet warm, and whilst its hospitalities were dispensed by its last brave master to all who approached it in friendly guise.

He of whom I would speak was the gallant Colonel Farquharson of Inverey, one of those concerned in the Earl of Mar's rising in the year 1715. The grand assemblage of clans which then took place in Braemar, under the specious pretext of a great hunting meeting, is sufficiently well known as a historical fact. Perhaps the magnificent scenery of that always exhilarating highland country, was never beheld under circumstances more truly enlivening than when it was thus peopled for a time by glittering nobles, and proud chieftains, in all the glory of their array, each surrounded by his own train of followers in numbers corresponding to his rank, and each vying with his fellows in the display of every thing that could add to his importance and magnificence. Although the real object of this their congregation afterwards proved to have been something of a much more serious nature than mere hunting, yet the semblance of the sport at least was kept up, the better to cloak their deeper designs. Regular *tinchels* took place, in which some thousands of highlanders, by forming a circuit of many miles on the mountain ridges of the forest, and by gradually moving towards a centre, hallooing as they went, drove the numerous herds of deer into one dense and unsettled mass, whence appeared a wood of moving antlers, the restlessness of which sufficiently betrayed the doubts and fears of the noble animals that bore them; until, by pressing closer upon them, they at length compelled the whole leather-coated phalanx to burst away down some narrow pass, where the sportsmen were placed in ambush at different points, prepared to select and to shoot at the largest and fattest harts the eye could catch, as they swept by them with the rapidity of a whirlwind. The splendour, as well as the intense interest of such a spectacle as this, exhibited as it was amidst rocky rivers and roaring waterfalls, where an apparently endless forest of enormous untamed pine-trees filled all the tributary glens, and climbed up the slopes of the mountains, where the echoes had rarely if ever been awakened by the woodman's axe, may be imagined but cannot well be described. The various tints of the tartans of the different clansmen; the eagle-plumed bonnets of the chiefs; the glittering of the gold and silver ornaments in which their persons shone; the manifestly more than hunting arms which were borne by their followers; the distant shouts that came from every part of the surrounding forest, softened by its muffling foliage, though multiplied into myriads of voices by the rocks that rang with them, and growing upon the ear as they drew nearer; the onward rush of the countless multitude of deer, bounding furiously forward; the instantaneous flashes and the rapid clang of the fire-arms; the wild death shrieks which followed, mingled with the exulting notes of bugles; the crowding together of the various groups; and, finally, the homeward march of this army of hunters to the triumphant strains of the bagpipe, afforded a romance of life which fair Scotland, prosperous as she may be, can never again hope to furnish.

It is well known, that Farquharson the chief of Invercauld, though secretly attached to that standard which the Earl of Mar's private wrongs had thus hastily led him to rear, was yet most unwilling to declare himself openly upon this occasion; for though he was brave as a lion, he was doubtful of the wisdom of an enterprise where the hopes of success were so extremely problematical, and where the abilities of the leaders were so very questionable.

So determined was he, indeed, to avoid importunity on the part of Lord Mar, that he went under some pretence to Aberdeen to escape his solicitations. His clansman, Farquharson of Inverey, fully participated in his doubts and hesitation. It might have been well for their cause, if the other chiefs had exhibited the same degree of prudence and caution. But Mar's oily eloquence, operating on men whose spirits were previously thrown into a state of emulation with each other, soon brought them all into those engagements which terminated so fatally with most of them. As for Inverey, although he managed to keep aloof from the toils for a time, yet when he was brought at length by circumstances into the matter, and found that the die was cast, he staked his life and fortunes with the rest in the most chivalric manner, and determined to conquer or die in support of that, which he had all along conscientiously held to be the rightful cause of his legitimate prince. The circumstances which ultimately led to this his resolution, were curious and accidental.

He was one evening returning from a solitary deer-stalking expedition, attended by two highland followers only, and he had already almost reached that wild and romantic spot, the Lynn of Dee, on his way homewards, when, at the door of a bothy, the

wooden roof of which sent up a wreathing smoke, that half hid the columnar stems of the tall pines surrounding it, he observed a ring of men intensely engaged with some exciting spectacle, within the small circle they formed. The place, he knew, was occupied by some of the Earl of Mar's English attendants, who there waited for the return of their master from the hunting; but although Inverey had hitherto contrived to avoid meeting that nobleman, and was still so anxious to keep out of his reach, that he did not wish to risk being recognised even by his domestics, yet the loud screams of distress which came from among them, which were heard above all the brutal merriment they seemed to excite, urged him to approach at all hazards. As he drew nearer, he discovered that the cries proceeded from a poor, half naked crazy woman, whom these barbarous lacqueys were compelling to dance violently, by stimulating her with the points of their naked swords whenever she attempted to relax her exertions; and this they brutally continued, even although she was about to faint from extreme exhaustion. The natural humanity that was lodged in the bosom of Inverey, would have sufficiently disposed him to have interfered on such an occasion as this, even if the wretched sufferer had been entirely a stranger to him. But he at once recognised her as a poor creature, who, born upon his property, had been all her life fed from his kitchen, except at such times as her fancy had led her to wander through the country in search of more precarious alms. He considered himself bound as her natural protector, to effect her rescue. But though boiling with indignation, he restrained his ire; and addressing himself mildly to one who seemed to be the principal person among her persecutors — "Sir," said he, "I beseech you to let that poor crazy creature go. There is but little manliness in taking such cruel sport out of one, whom it has pleased God to deprive of most of those blessings which he has so liberally bestowed upon us."

"And who are you, sir," demanded the haughty pampered domestic, as he contemptuously surveyed Inverey, whose plain highland hunting dress bespoke him as but little better than the two *gillies* who followed him.— "Who are you who dare thus to intrude on the sports of the Earl of Mar's gentlemen? By St. George, if you don't take yourself out of sight directly, you may chance to leave your ears behind you."

"Oh, help poor Maggy Veck MacErchar!" cried the poor sufferer, availing herself of the momentary pause that was produced by Inverey's appeal, to take one gasp of breath and to sue for his friendly aid.

"Dance, ye witch!" cried some of the fellows, again cruelly pricking her with the points of their swords, till she set up a shriek that was piteous to hear.

"Come come, gentlemen!" said Inverey, patiently but firmly, "this cannot be; ye are not God's creatures if ye persist in this cruel sport: I pr'ythee, let the poor woman go!"

"By Heaven, master, but thou shalt be her partner, an' we have any more of your preaching," exclaimed the same man again.

"Toss him into the ring!" cried another fellow; and "Toss him into the ring!" was instantly re-echoed from the rest.

"Tearloch and Ian, stick to your master!" cried Inverey, in Gaelic, to his two followers, and drawing back a step or two as if for the purpose of retreat, but in reality to gain greater space and accumulated force, he suddenly threw himself forward with so tremendous an impetus on the ring, that he fractured its continuity, overthrew one half of the men that composed it, and, snatching up the poor object of their persecution within his left arm, he burst his way through those on the opposite side, and, unsheathing his claymore, he rushed on, followed by his two attendants, to the single pine tree which then afforded a precarious passage across that yawning ravine between the rocks, through which the river Dee boils furiously along in a series of cataracts and rapids. It must have been a fearful sight to have beheld him bearing his burden along that rude log, rendered slippery, as it always was, by the moisture deposited on it from the continual mist arising from the agitated water below; but he carried his burden firmly, and he soon set the poor creature safely down on the farther bank; and confiding her to the care of his two attendants, whom he humanely ordered to hurry home with her, he snatched his rifle from the hand of Tearloch, and planted himself behind the huge trunk of an old tree, in a position that perfectly commanded the alpine bridge. When the whole of the cowardly route of lacqueys who pursued him, came up and saw how he had posted himself, and that one only could cross the perilous bridge at a time, they halted, deliberated, and darted many an angry glance across to him whom they would have fain assaulted with their overwhelming

numbers; but no single man chose to be the first to hazard being shot in attempting the passage; whilst Inverey, on his part, was compelled to keep within the shelter of his sylvan fortress, from conviction of the certain death that awaited him from their fire-arms if he moved from it but a hair's breadth.

Whilst they were thus standing in doubt how to act on either side, bugles and bagpipes were heard at some distance echoing through the forest, and as the sound drew nearer, the gorgeous but irregular array of the hunters appeared winding among the tall bare pine stems like some procession moving under the aisles of a cathedral. At their head was the Earl of Mar, gallantly attired, and surrounded by many of the nobility and chieftains of Scotland. Inverey would have fain withdrawn himself, had it not been for the menacing attitude of his opponents, and the numerous long-barrelled pieces which they kept pointed towards the tree that covered him. Unwilling as he was, therefore, to meet with the Earl, he now saw that he must make up his mind to that alternative, for his lordship had already observed the strange position which he occupied, and was surprised to see the cat-like watch that his own people held over him.

"Laurence," said the Earl, addressing the principal person among them, and who was the same person who had treated Inverey with so much insolence,—"how comes it that ye stand here thus in such hostile guise? and who may yonder Highlander be who seems posted as if he were determined to use his rifle against any one who may dare to attempt the passage? What!—nay, if I have ought of shrewdness in me, it is mine old friend Inverey. What, ho! Inverey!" shouted he. "Well met! for hostile though your air be, methinks I can answer for you that you will fire no deadly shot at Mar, or any one in Mar's company."

"You do me no more than justice, my lord," cried Inverey, quitting his shelter, and coming across to meet the Earl; "trust me, I will never level deadly tube at thee, nor at any friend of thine; but I was compelled to plant myself yonder to protect me from the attack of a scoundrel knot of your English lacqueys, who, learning nothing from their noble master's habitual courtesy, have proved to me how they can misconduct themselves when his eye is not on them."

"Shame, shame, knaves!" cried the Earl, much moved. "Pray, tell me, Inverey, which of them were most in fault, and, by Heaven, I will forthwith punish them as they deserve."

"Nay, I entreat you, my lord," said Inverey,—"clemency often does more in curing such faults than severity. Leave them to me, I beseech you, and I think I shall easily convince them that it were wiser for them to take less upon them whilst they are here in Braemar than they have hitherto thought it meet to do,—and above all things," continued he, sinking his voice so as to be heard by the abashed culprits alone, "it were well for some of them to recollect, that God, who sees all human actions, is often pleased to pour out his divine vengeance, even in this world, on the devoted heads of those who cruelly afflict the poor and the weak in body,—and particularly the weak in mind, for the care of whom He is supposed to exert His especial providence. And now, my lord," added he, raising his voice again, "let the matter pass from your lordship's mind, I pray you."

"Well, Inverey," replied the Earl, "I leave the knaves entirely in your generous hands; and, in truth, we have something else to look to at present than the chastisement of such varlets. I have much to say to you, and much to hope from your advice in momentous matters on which I have been anxiously but vainly looking for an opportunity of consulting you; and now that I have found you, trust me I will not part with you again. You must with us to partake of these our festivities."

"My lord," said Inverey, "this garb, which I doubt not was the chief cause of these honest gentlemen's incivility, is apology enough for my declining your kindness."

"Nay," replied the Earl, "no such apology as that will serve. There is enough of day yet left for you to go to your own house to fit yourself for the feast, with such apparel as may be becoming the distinguished rank you hold in the brave clan Farquharson; so haste thee home that you may come and join our revels. I have many noble and dear friends here whom you must know, and to whom I have longed to make your virtues known."

Inverey was inwardly vexed that all his precautions to avoid the Earl had thus been frustrated by the accident of a moment; but making a virtue of necessity, he courteously acceded to his hospitable request.

If the hunting pageant of the day had appeared glorious and rich, that which the evening banquet presented, was still more gorgeous, when so many gallant nobles

crowded towards the festive circle, dressed in all their grandeur, and when their every nod and beck was attended to by shoals of gaily dressed menials, whilst the board glittered with antique plate, and groaned beneath the load of inviting meats and drinks, to so great a degree of profusion, that any one might have imagined that Mar had resolved to stake his all upon the desperate game he had to play, and had determined to begin it by the utter bewilderment of those whom he wished to gain over to his great enterprise. It was not luxurious feeding, or deep drinking, that gained over the Farquharson or his kinsman the brave Inverey. But, seeing that their influence could not arrest the rashness which so unseasonably hurried on the Earl and his friends, they at length resolved to give their best aid to that cause which they so much cherished, even although they were sufficiently sensible of the apparent absence of all reasonable chance of success, arising from the deficiency of their present means of action.

When Inverey put himself at the head of his branch of the Farquharsons, to march off to join the Earl of Mar's army, in which he had received the rank of Colonel, poor Maggy Veck MacErchar, who had been away on one of her wandering excursions, suddenly appeared, and coming running up to him, and seizing him by the plaid, "Where are all these bonny men going?" said she to him, earnestly, in Gaelic, "and where are *you* going to, Inverey? It's not to the hunting, I'm thinking?—but, wherever it be, Maggy Veck shall go with ye."

"Nay, Maggy," said Inverey, smiling, "you can't go with me."

"Ay, but I will, though," replied Maggy, "for I trow there's something more than hunting in your head; and of all these bonny men who hold their heads so high, who knows how many of them may ever see Braemar again, or who can tell where their last beds may be made. It's not hunting ye're upon, Inverey."

"Whatever it may be, it concerns not you, Maggy," replied Inverey, kindly putting her aside. "You must stay in the kitchen here, and take care of the castle till I come back."

"Talk to me not," said Maggy, pressing forward again, and seizing his wrist with unusual energy,—"tell me not that I shall not go. I must never leave you again. I was sleeping at the ferry of Cambusmey yester-e'en, when methought your mother's spirit appeared to me, and warned me that it was my *wierd* to save your life at the forfeit of my own. Full gladly should I pay the price, I trow, even if I had never owed you more than I do for snatching me from the cruel fangs of those devils incarnate, at the Lynn of Dee. But where should Maggy Veck have been if the house of Inverey had not been her support in sickness and in health, in weakness of body and in wanderings of mind, ever since she entered on this weary world? and is not her wretched life itself all too little for what she owes to you and yours?"

"All that may be very well, Maggy," said Inverey, endeavouring to force a laugh to hide those tears with which the poor creature's strong professions of attachment were rapidly filling his eyes, "all that you say may be well enough, and I feel very grateful to you for your self-devoted protection, but trust me the time is not come yet."

"But I will go!" said Maggy clinging to him, whilst her eyes began to roll in one of those temporary paroxysms of insanity into which she was sometimes thrown by strongly excited emotions, and she continued to shriek out, "I will go!—I will work out my wierd!—I will go!"

Seeing that he had no other alternative, Colonel Farquharson was at last compelled to treat her with gentle constraint, and she was finally placed under the care of an old man and his wife who formed all the garrison that was left to guard the house of Inverey. As Maggy was not liberated from confinement until some days afterwards, all chance of her successfully following the party was cut off. But it was very remarkable that she never attempted this; nay she went on no rambling excursion as she was so frequently wont to do, but continued to loiter listlessly about the old house of Inverey, maintaining a moody silence with all who attempted to provoke her to speak, and apparently altogether unexcited by any event however important, and seeming not to hear or to see aught, save when the dogs barked, or footsteps approached, when she would run to the door as if to ascertain whether it might not be him, in her care for whose safety her whole thoughts seemed to be wrapped up.

It is far beyond the extent of my present purpose to go into the history of that unfortunate enterprise, which, chiefly owing to the irresolution and unfitness of its leader, fell to the ground, more from its own intrinsic weakness than from any greatness in those efforts which were made against it. Suffice it to say, that Colonel Farquharson of

Inverey found his gloomy forebodings sufficiently verified, and he was glad to escape in safety to his native valley, where, trusting to its extremely remote situation, he ventured one evening, in company with a single friend, the partner of his flight, both faint with hunger and overcome with fatigue, to approach his own house under the shade of night. That he might not run the risk of being recognised by any one but the old couple who had the charge of it, he remained hid in some bushes at no great distance till his friend, who was a stranger, advanced and knocked at the door. The old couple appeared, and to them the gentleman presented a certain token which satisfied them that their beloved master was at hand, and they in their turn assured him that all was safe. He was about to return to relieve Inverey's anxiety, whilst the old man and his wife were thinking of some plausible pretext for sending Maggy out of the way, lest she might by some accident be the innocent cause of betraying her best benefactor, when suddenly, and as if actuated by some strange supernatural influence, she sprang towards the door from her lair in the kitchen,—turned the gentleman round—looked earnestly in his face—pushed him rudely aside—and then, by some instinct which it is impossible to account for, or from some symptom of which no one else was aware, she rushed out and ran directly towards the thicket where Inverey was concealed. Hearing footsteps rapidly approaching, Inverey became alarmed, and feeling his knees abruptly seized by some one with a violence that almost threw him down, he thought of nothing but treachery; and, drawing his dirk, he was on the point of plunging it into the body of the person who embraced them, when the well known voice of Maggy Veck MacErchar saluted his ears, arrested his hand, and allayed his alarm.

"And do I clasp you once more, Inverey?" cried she in her native language, and sobbing with excitement.—"Bird of my heart—Och hone!—Och hone!—Blessings on thee!—blessings on thee!—my visions told me of this, and they are come true,—and now, Maggy Veck's wierd must be won!"

The Colonel answered the poor creature's joyous and vociferous welcomes with his wonted kindness; but being conscious that he required the closest concealment, he was far from being well satisfied that she should have so soon made the discovery of his return. But all he could now do was to caution her not to mention his name to any human being, and above all things not to give the slightest hint to any one that he had returned home, for that his life was sought for by the king's troops, parties of whom were scouring the country in all directions, eagerly seeking to apprehend the various leaders of the insurrection. One security for his safety Inverey was particularly anxious to have from her, and that was that she should remain constantly at home; and to his injunctions in this respect he had hoped that her recent very wonderful steadiness in this particular would be a sufficient security for her future submission. But here he was mistaken; for whatever had been her conduct previously, she now betrayed a very extraordinary degree of restlessness that was altogether unaccountable. Inverey ordered his two old domestics to watch her motions narrowly; but in spite of all their care and attention, Maggy suddenly disappeared, to the no small dismay and apprehension of those whom she left behind her.

Inverey and his friend had hitherto kept themselves carefully concealed in the old mansion, never venturing abroad, even to take the air, except under the cloud of night; but now their care and vigilance were redoubled, for they felt the strongest apprehensions that poor Maggy Veck might in some way or other innocently betray their secret. But so far as she was concerned their fears were without foundation.

Those who are acquainted with the wild scenery of the Braemar country, must be aware that it is closed in by the pass of Cambusmey, immediately above that bleak moor on which the celebrated battle of Culblane was fought. It happened that poor Maggy Veck, who had been wandering about from house to house with her meal-wallet, until it had been nearly filled by the little contributions which she had received from those who knew her, had sat down one evening to rest herself by the side of a pure spring, under the shade of the oaks, everywhere covering the ground immediately within the pass. Having taken some crusts and broken meat from the innermost recesses of her bag, she was in the act of satisfying her hunger by devouring them, when she was suddenly scared from the spot she had chosen by the heavy sound of the trampling of a body of horse coming over the knoll that blocked the entrance to this part of the valley. Filled with alarm, she started up hastily, and darting into a neighbouring thicket at a few paces distant, she squatted herself down

in the midst of it, and lay there concealed by the overhanging boughs of some hazle copse. She had hardly thus secreted herself, when she beheld a numerous party of dragoons filing into the pass. As they drew nearer, she observed a man in a plain dress riding on a pony immediately behind the officer who seemed to command the party; and her flesh trembled, and her blood ran cold to her heart, when she discovered that it was that very Laurence who had been the cruel inventor of her torments at the Lynn of Dee, and who had instigated his wicked companions to carry them into effect. From the manner in which he was addressed by the captain of the troop, it was evident that he was acting as guide.

"How far may we now be from the house of Inverey?" demanded the Captain.

"Something about fifteen miles or so, if I remember right," replied the other; "but these Highland miles are confounded long."

"So much?" said the officer. "Then, methinks, we must needs halt here for a brief space of time, to let both horse and man have rest and refreshment."

"It may be as well, captain," replied Laurence.

"I wish we could catch some Highland peasant, who could tell us whether this rebel Colonel Farquharson be really likely to be found in his own house," said the captain.

"I am assured he is there," replied the other; "if I had not been so, I should not have been the means of leading you all this long way; and if after a hasty meal you will but ride on to Inverey without drawing bridle, you cannot fail to find him in his bed; and then shall he be paid off, I trow, for the long sermon his worship gave me at the Lynn of Dee, for making that witch dance for our fun. If we can but catch her, by all the fiends she shall caper till she dies."

"Dismount, then, my lads!" said the captain of the party, giving the word of command to his men, "make haste to picquet your horses where the best patches of grass may be found, and then you may eat your rations beneath the shade of these trees, and let every man of you make good use of his time, for it will be but short."

It may be guessed how much poor Maggy Veck must have quaked when she beheld the captain of the party and two of his officers, attended by the villainous Laurence, approaching the very spring where she had been so lately sitting, and so close to which she now lay, and this for the purpose of taking their meal there.

"Here is a green bank and a pure spring, gentlemen, where you may rest and eat comfortably," said Laurence, as he led them thither.

"What have we here?" said one of the subalterns, kicking with his foot at one of Maggy's half gnawed bones which she had dropped in her hurry.

"Some one has been making an inn of this place very lately," said the captain.

Maggy's breath seemed to leave her body for a moment as she beheld Laurence throwing his eyes keenly about, and even taking a step or two towards the thicket where she lay, as if disposed to look for the last occupant of the spot; but her fears were somewhat relieved when she beheld him proceed to open a havresack, and prepare to lay its contents on the grass before the officers, who had by this time seated themselves; and no sooner did she see him thus employed than she bolted out from the opposite side of the bush to that where they were seated, and sprang into the thickest part of the adjacent oak wood.

"It was a fat hind, I warrant me," said Laurence, "there be many of them hereabouts."

"I wish we had a slice of her," replied the leader of the party.

These words reached the terrified ears of Maggy as she fled, but they were all she staid to hear; for, throwing away her meal wallets, she threaded through the stems of the trees, and the tangled brakes; dashed through the mountain streams that hurried downwards to the Dee across her way; and scoured up the glen with a swiftness little short of that which a hind herself could have exerted. On she rushed through the romantic Pass of Ballater, without ever halting to draw breath. Ever and anon as the breeze came sweeping up the glen behind her, she thought it bore with it the sound of the tramp of the troop, and, breathless as she was, she urged her speed with double force. Grasping a rugged bough which lay by the river's bank, she groped her way safely through the ford of the Dee below Castleton, and the water was cooling to her burning feet and flagging limbs. But hardly was she safe on the southern bank, on her way towards the ancient bridge over the Clugny, near the remains of Malcolm Canmore's castle, than she heard but too certainly the sullen though distant sound of the march of the troop horses echoing from the abrupt face of

the Craig of Clugny behind her. She had yet some four or five miles to run, and nature was almost about to give way under the superhuman exertions she was making. She stopped for one moment to take a single gulp of water from a rill that poured itself across the way; and having thus gathered a temporary accession of strength, she rushed on again with inconceivable velocity. As she flew, the distant sound of the troop was for some time heard only at intervals as the windings of the path happened to be more or less favourable for its conveyance, being ever and anon lost in the more powerful rush of the Dee as she chanced to approach nearer to its stream. But the night was now extremely still, and as from time to time she happened to recede from the river, the echoing pace of the dragoon horses was heard more frequently and more distinctly, until by degrees it became nearly continuous, and this whilst she was yet nearly two miles from Inverey. Poor Maggy's head began to spin round with absolute faintness; her temples throbbed, and her heart beat as if it would have burst through her side. She staggered to a rill that fell in a tiny cascade over a little rock in the bank on her left hand, and, taking a deep but hasty draught, she again urged on her desperate race. But nature now refused her the speed to which her anxiously excited spirit would have impelled her. The tramp of the troop was manifestly gaining on her; the voices of the men began now and then to be heard. But still she toiled on, until gasping at last, she tottered towards some bushes of juniper that grew by the way side, and sank down among them in the dark shade which was thrown over them by a mingled group of pines and birches. There poor Maggy lay in a kind of waking swoon of fear and exhaustion, and with her heart beating as if it would have burst from her breast. She had hardly been there for a minute when in the intense obscurity of the night, the whole troop filed past her without perceiving her.

They were now within a quarter of a mile of Inverey. All seemed to be lost, when she was again roused by hearing the captain of the dragoons suddenly order his troop to halt. His object in so doing was to caution his men to keep silence, and to make each individual fully aware of the manner in which the surprise was to be effected. But poor Maggy was only aware of the simple circumstance that they had halted, and she stopped not to inquire wherefore. Starting again to her feet, she dived and ducked through the brushwood till she had made her way beyond them; and then summoning all her remaining strength into one last effort, she flew onwards with a speed which was, if possible, greater than any that she had yet exerted, and she gained the old house of Inverey before the troopers were again in motion. But the door was fast. She thundered at it with the rugged branch which she had still kept firmly grasped in her hand. "The Saxon soldiers! the Saxon soldiers!" cried she in Gaelic; "Inverey! Inverey! the Saxon soldiers! Open!—open the door and flee! and Maggy Veck MacErchar's wierd is won!"

The door was opened by the old woman, and poor Maggy Veck immediately dropped down in the threshold.

Inverey and his friend had started up at her well-known voice, and they had hastily thrown on what clothes and arms they had at hand, for they had ever kept themselves fully prepared for surprise. Hurrying out the old man and his wife, Inverey made them carry off poor Maggy Veck to the shelter of a cottage at some distance from the house, whither he ordered them to carry her with care, and on no account to leave her; and then, turning to his friend, he urged him to make the best of his way up the face of the hill rising to the south. "I will but down into the cellar to pouch a bottle or two of good old wine," said he, "to keep us warm on the hill-side, and then I will follow you in a trice."

"Wine!" exclaimed his friend in astonishment, "how can you think of wine at a moment like this? do you not hear the tramp of the troop horses?"

"I cannot help that," said Inverey coolly, "we must have some comfort with us," and so saying, he disappeared in a moment in the direction of the cellar.

His friend rushed out in front of the house. So far as he could guess by his ear, the troopers seemed to be then about two hundred yards off, and to be approaching slowly and cautiously. He listened anxiously—but the sound had suddenly ceased, as if they had halted, and immediately afterwards it was renewed, but it was now so subdivided in different directions as to leave not a doubt on his mind that they were filing off singly to surround the mansion. He gave his friend Inverey up for lost, and whilst he bewailed his fate, he secretly cursed his folly which had thus produced his own certain destruc-

tion, not that of both. The only hope of his own escape now lay in the extreme darkness of the night, but how to proceed, he did not very well know. At length he was somewhat cheered by hearing his friend's voice whispering near him.

"This way," said Inverey. "Stay—halt a moment beside this bush: here comes a trooper."

The man passed close to them without observing them, and he had no sooner gone by, than the two fugitives again moved forward, stealing foot after foot without the slightest noise, until they were certain that they had got beyond the circle of horsemen, who were slowly closing in around the building: then it was that they made the best use of their limbs to reach the hill face, and scrambled high up its front until they were fairly seated under an enormous fir tree on the very brow of the steep acclivity, whence they could hear enough to convince them that the house of Inverey was already entered.

"The nests are warm, but the birds are flown," said Inverey. "They will find little to gratify their greedy thirst for plunder, for, as you know, I was well prepared for this."

"I wish they may not fire the house in revenge for their disappointment," said his friend.

"With all my heart," said Inverey, laughing; "the night is rather airish, and a bonfire will be comfortable. Meanwhile, let us drink confusion to them and to the master they serve."

"How can you possibly take this matter so lightly, Inverey?" demanded his friend: "your levity confounds me."

"You will see anon," replied he laughing again, and at the same time uncorking a bottle: "meanwhile, until they are pleased to give us more light, do you hold this silver quach, and keep your finger in such a position, that you may feel so as to tell me certainly when the liquor touches the brim; for, mark me, the wine is too good to be wasted. How like ye that, I pr'ythee?"

"'Tis excellent," replied his friend, "but would we could have drank it under happier circumstances."

"Nay! look yonder!" said Inverey, after he had swallowed a bumper. "By Saint Andrew but you have guessed well! See how the windows begin to be lighted up—ha, ha, ha! See, see — the joists are already on fire. See how the lurid smoke bursts its way through the roof—and now the flames follow —ha, ha, ha! We shall soon have sport."

"What trumpet call was that?" exclaimed his companion.

"By heaven, they are mounting in haste," said Inverey, starting to his feet. "See yonder where the light is strong, what a bustle they are in."

"Some sudden alarm seems to have reached them," said his friend.

"Now, now, now!" cried Inverey, springing from the ground with excitement, and rubbing his hands with extreme eagerness and anxiety of countenance, which was now strongly illuminated by the glare of light thrown on him from below — "Now, now, now! — By all that is good they gallop off."

Inverey threw himself down on the bank as if overwhelmed with disappointment. The blaze was now so brilliant, that every motion of the troop, every glance of their arms was distinctly seen as they mounted within the illuminated space; but they were no sooner in their saddles, than the word was given to march, and they swept away like a legion of spirits into the deep and impenetrable shade of the night, their reality being alone proved by the loud clattering of the heels of the retreating troop-horses. In an instant the whole building seemed as if it were lifted upwards—a sudden and instantaneous sheet of flame burst forth — a tremendous explosion rent the air; and, whilst its appalling roar was running the whole circuit of all the thousand echoes of the valley, numerous fragments of stones fell around them on the face of the hill, and great part of the solid walls crumbled down like the descent of an avalanche, and a dense opaque cloud of smoke and dust arose to mingle itself with the murky vault of heaven. The conflagration seemed to be at once extinguished by the falling ruins, and only showed itself now and then by partial kindlings among the smouldering ashes.

"They have had more luck than they deserved," said Inverey; "but since it has pleased God to spare them, it is not for a Christian to murmur that he has not had his revenge; and my conscience at least is free from the after-thought of their carnage. But I did think it no harm to prepare for them a self-inflicted penalty depending on their own base and cowardly action in burning my house and home. And now, my friend, since these rascals have put it out of my power to provide you with better fare or

quarters, you must e'en take another tasse, and make the best you can of this hill-side for a chamber, till day-break may tell us whether all be safe below. Here!—drink this bumper to a good riddance to the glen of all such guests!"

After having spent the night in the best manner they could, and the sun had arisen to assure them that their enemies had departed, Inverey and his friend slowly descended the hill, and cautiously approached the ruins. The walls were black, the neighbouring trees were scathed, and the embers of the conflagration still smoked and smouldered. As they approached them, and when they had got within thirty or forty yards of them, they observed the dead corpse of a man. He lay on his breast, with a long heavy lintel stone laid across his back so as to have crushed that part of his body to an absolute jelly. His legs and arms were extended, and his face was unnaturally twisted round; so that the torture of his violent death was horribly read in the contorted fixture of the features, the gaping mouth, wide stretched eyes, and protruding eye-balls. It was the corpse of the traitor Laurence who had guided the troopers to the spot. Congratulating himself that he was not under military command, he had remained behind eagerly searching for plunder: but finding nothing that he could carry off, and the flames becoming rather dangerous, he was in the act of making a hasty retreat, when he was overtaken by this awful but just retribution. The enormous stone having been thrown into the air by the explosion, had crushed him to the earth like a toad, and he was the only man who had suffered.

Colonel Farquharson's first inquiry was after poor Maggy Veck MacErchar, the saviour of his life. Hastening to the cottage where she lay, he found her stretched on a pallet bed. She was pale and motionless, and her soul seemed to have just quitted its earthly tenement. He approached with anxious tenderness and awe to ascertain the truth. As if his presence had called back her flitting spirit, the previously inanimate frame suddenly erected itself,—the glazed eye shot forth a strange unearthly fire. It gazed for a moment on Colonel Farquharson. She threw up her hands, and clasped them energetically together, and in a clear but subdued voice, she cried in her native Gaelic:—

"Inverey!—blessed be God that I have saved Inverey! Ay, beckon, my lady—I come, I come! for now—now I have won my wierd!"

Her spirit took flight, and left the lifeless clay to fall back in the bed. Inverey was deeply affected by the scene, and few obsequies were ever more honoured, or had more sincere or more manly tears bestowed upon them, than those which were given to poor Maggy Veck MacErchar, by her sad master.

END OF VOL. I.

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